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*With Mrs. Colquhoun's
very kind regards to
Mrs. Heath—*

MAURICE,

THE ELECTOR OF SAXONY.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE OF THE
SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

BY MRS. COLQUHOUN.

Dedicated, by Permission,
TO
HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF SAXONY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
T. C. NEWBY, PUBLISHER,
72, MORTIMER STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE.

1844.

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DEDICATION.



TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF SAXONY.

SIRE,

YOUR Majesty has graciously deigned to accept the Dedication of my attempt to restore to coloured life the gray shades of Saxon History.

As a Descendant of the brave Elector Maurice, and as the Head of the illus-

Don. No. 10. 49. 6. 10. 49. 3v.

trious Saxon Dynasty, your Majesty will decide, whether the effort of an unknown and foreign artist in portraying this likeness, deserves to be admitted among the family resemblances in your Ancestrel Hall.

If I have not entirely failed in refreshing in the minds of my countrymen the glorious memory of the “Hero of Germany,” it must be ascribed to the character of my subject, and the just appreciation of his noble qualities, virtue, wisdom and heroism:—qualities which have happily proved hereditary on the throne of Saxony.

To your Majesty’s protection I have no other claim than that of the un-

DEDICATION.

v

feigned and unbounded respect, with
which I have the honour to subscribe
myself,

Sire,

Your Majesty's devoted Servant,

KATHARINE COLQUHOUN.

ST. JAMES'S PLACE,
MAY 10, 1844.

MAURICE,

THE

ELECTOR OF SAXONY.

CHAPTER I.

“COME, meine frau,” said the sturdy miller, as he jerked his bonnet to dash from it the rain drops, which it had imbibed in his transit from the mill to the cottage, forming a semicircle of moisture on the newly sanded floor.

The cottage was but a few yards distant from the place of his daily labour and his daily gain ; but the rain fell fast ; the exposed

situation of the mill and cottage bared the inhabitants of the latter to all the freaks of wind and weather, from whichever quarter the storm might come. The heath on which these buildings stood was of some extent, dotted here and there with scattered clumps of fir, birch, holly, and low furze; shallow pools, and some undulations of the ground, with pits, and ravines partly concealed by brushwood, which found in these hollows a better soil from the deposit of vegetable matter drifted into them, in which to spread their tangled roots, varied the barrenness of the heath; the scene was fair to look upon; below was the straggling village, with the spire of its church partly concealed by trees, and beyond on a high and rocky knoll, stood the Castle of Reiterstein, with its unequal towers, backed by dark woods and lofty hills, while a small tributary stream wound tortuously, sparkling by snatches through the trees, and nearly surrounding the castle

walls ; this liquid mirror was crossed by a stone bridge.

Besides the two or three low huts occupied occasionally by shepherds, the heath presented no dwellings, and the miller, although he could not boast that he was in actual possession, lord of all he surveyed, derived as much enjoyment from the prospect as its owner could do. His humble habitation was reared within a few yards of the mill ; it consisted of a large kitchen, with a capacious fire-place, admitting low settles on either side ; at one end a door opened into a small apartment, which served as a sort of office to the miller, and a work-room for his female companions, consisting of Theresa his wife, and Thumelda his daughter ; three chambers above afforded lodging for the family ; on one side scullery, dairy, and sheds ; on the other, granary, stables and lodges running at right angles with the house, formed a yard, which was

terminated by a small garden for vegetables, herbs, and simples; in front a porch with benches, and a few flowers at the side guarded by a low paling. This description completes the rough sketch of the miller's abode.

We must briefly give some account of its humble inhabitants, inasmuch as they are destined to figure in our following chapters.

The miller himself, was still in the prime of life; of goodly proportions, somewhat above the ordinary height, of robust frame, and ruddy complexion; he had sharp intelligent grey eyes, and a mouth expressive of a naturally kind character; his thickly curling light brown hair, was as yet untinged by the approach of wintry age, and a well formed head, with a nose rather thick than aquiline, corresponded with his other features, which were altogether of a most agreeable and ingenuous cast.

Krantz, the miller, bore a high reputation

for probity, no man took note of the corn delivered at the mill, assured that the produce would be faithfully rendered back to him to the uttermost grain. The consequence of this impression was, that it was never idle while there was a breeze upon the heath.

Krantz succeeded his father in the mill, to whom it had been granted upon the acknowledgment of a sack of flour yearly, in reward for long service; and the preservation of the Baron Rodolf von Reiterstein's life in the battlefield.

This family had been, from time immemorial, vassals, and retainers on the Reiterstein estate; but both the generous Baron Rodolf, and the faithful elder Krantz, had long since been gathered to their fathers, the former sleeping under silken banners, and warlike trophies in the chapel of the castle, the latter beneath a green mound in the village churchyard. The present

Krantz had married early in life the daughter of the Baroness's favorite attendant; at that time a light, fairy-formed, brown eyed girl. Years and maternity had somewhat rounded her originally slight figure, and perhaps a cheerful disposition, a happy home, and competency, which was not enjoyed without frugality, and did not permit the indulgence of indolence, tended in a great measure to preserve health and good looks, and to add some solidity as years passed on. Two children were granted to this excellent pair; a youth of twenty, now absent, worthy of his parents, and the pride they took in his high qualities. And Thumelda, their daughter, who was as lovely a maiden as rural domain ever boasted, and as good a one. Such teaching as the reverend pastor and the miller could give, had not been neglected by her,—the damsel was never idle, nor did she deem any household occupation needful to be done, unworthy

of her attention or performance ; a village orphan was therefore all they required to aid them in their small and simple economy. Thumelda had been for some months engaged to the handsome Konrad, but the miller was in no haste to deprive himself of the society of his child, or throw upon her at the age of eighteen, the cares of a family, for which as yet Konrad was not sufficiently opulent to provide.

“ Come ! meine frau, now for supper, and some fresh turf on the hearth. I am late, but the sky looks black, and cruel in the north, and I have been detained awhile to make all snug at the mill.”

This was an implied apology, for to oblige a neighbour, the good man had kept his mill going till the last minute ; the sun had gone round also, and had sunk to rest in a watery cloud, which foreboded a storm, and allowed no delay in making the mill all snug as he expressed it. The homely meal was set

forth, and soon discussed ; the shades of night were deepened by the storm which now beat with violence against the casements. The miller's robust frame was stretched in comfortable ease upon one of the settles in the chimney corner, while Theresa prepared to remove the remains of their evening repast.

“Thanks !” said Krantz, “for a good meal, although an humble one ; and now, my Thumelda, come and kiss thy father ; methinks thou lookest somewhat tired, after the village revels of this morning. What ails my child ? did Konrad forget the love-knot at Kemnitz fair, or take a turn too long with one of farmer Müller's daughters ?”

“Neither, my father,” answered Thumelda, “Konrad is kind and constant, but——”

“But what, my child ?”

A tear stood in his daughter's bright eye, and a blush tinged her cheek as she replied : “my mother will tell you why I am vexed,

and why I fear Konrad may be hurt, and ye I was not to blame."

The father smiled. "Ah! as I thought, somelover's difference, and Konrad, although a good and generous youth, is somewhat hasty and jealous."

"You are partly right," joined in Theresa, "but the sooner you know why Thumelda is so disturbed, the better, that worse may not come of it, and anxiously have we been waiting for you this evening. As you know, you left her down at the village with Konrad and old Hilda to enjoy awhile the sports going on; well, while they were dancing in the group, who should suddenly appear among them, whom we thought far away, but our bold, dark Baron."

At the mention of the Baron, the miller started from his listless posture; finding his wife pause from his sudden movement, he hastily cried, "go on."

"The Baron," continued Theresa, "when

the dance was suspended, mixed among the group with some of his lawless companions: he had remained looking on for some time, but after awhile he fixed his bold, dark eyes on our child, and said ‘Ah! my pretty lass, and where are you from?’ Thumelda quietly answered.

“‘I am the daughter of Krantz the Miller.

“‘Indeed! and a bright jewel too, far too handsome to be hid in so dusty a casket. You are worth a more costly keeping.’”

“Thumelda liked neither his looks nor his manner, but her modesty did not suit his bold ways, and he seized her hand to lead her forth. She said she was tired, and had no wish to dance again, but he would not be denied, and dragged her into the throng. As soon as it was concluded she escaped from him, mixed in the crowd, and then ran home alone, for Konrad, after watching them for a few minutes, had dis-

appeared ; but Thumelda says he looked angry, and flung away from the dancers. Our child dreads this bad man, and fears, lest Konrad should suppose she had given him any encouragement, especially as he has not been up the hill to seek her, or inquire how she got home."

The miller seemed to take this affair, even more seriously into consideration than his wife and daughter. His habitually open, good humoured countenance exhibited unusual signs of perturbation and anger. "Thumelda," he exclaimed, "must on no account leave the mill while the Baron remains at the castle, nor must he see her again. You know as well as I do, with whom we have to deal;—but for the persuasions of that headstrong, jealous youth, she never should have joined the revels this morning ;—and he deserted her," he added with vexation, "when his presence was most needed."

“Oh! my father, do not blame Konrad; who could foresee that the Baron would be there, or would notice the miller’s daughter?”

“I could believe he would do so,” answered Krantz, “and not for the fairest field of corn ever garnered into the mill loft, would I that this should have happened, nor should it, if I had suspected him to be in this part of the country.”

Scarcely was his speech concluded, when the rain pattered more loudly against the low casements, the wind whistled in wild eddies around the house, and a clap of thunder, unusual at the season, confirmed the miller in the wisdom of his evening’s precautions. Amidst the din, a moan reached Thumelda’s ears, it seemed borne away by the bustling wind. “Hark!” she cried, “what was that?”

“The sighing of the wind,” replied Krantz; “you are fearful tonight;—” but speedily

another moan heard in the partial lull of the storm, checked the miller's unbelief, while a feeble knock at the door further convinced him, that Thumelda was not beset by idle fears.

"I will go," said Krantz; "it was the cry of distress and must not be repeated."

Thus saying, he unlocked the door, and went into the porch.

"Here, here, Theresa!" he exclaimed, "quick, and help!" His wife hastened across the kitchen, and reached the door in time to hold it open, which a gust of wind and rain rendered no easy task; while the miller bore into the house a female, drenched, and nearly insensible, whom he gave into Thumelda's arms; he then went out a second time, and returned with a child about a year old. They placed the female on one of the settles, and had removed some of her dripping garments, ere she

seemed conscious of their friendly efforts to afford her relief. Theresa poured out a cup of wine, which she held to the lips of the sufferer; the small quantity she took appeared to revive her. "Thumelda, do you look to the child," said Krantz. The maiden ran hastily up stairs, and it was the work of a few moments only to undress the little one, wrap him in a blanket, and then supply him with some warm bread and milk. "Now Thumelda," said the kind hearted Theresa, "make ready the small chamber next to yours, for these poor wanderers, the rest of their wet clothes must be removed, I will prepare some."——Here the stranger interposed by a feeble pressure on Theresa's arm, which seemed to beg for some delay; looking anxiously on her child and around, she faintly uttered, "secrecy," then made a sign for the lamp, and motioning the miller and his wife to approach, displayed a small enamelled cross, saying, "by this you will

know me." They both earnestly examined the proffered trinket, and seemed for some seconds bewildered. The miller then crossed the kitchen with a hasty stride, barred fast the door, closed the shutters, and removed the lamp into a more shaded corner.

"Now, my wife, caution to you is needless, but Thumelda, who as yet knows not the necessity, must be told, that as she values my love, this lady's coming must not be whispered, even to Konrad."

"Trust me, my father, without the threatened risk of such a penalty, I will say nought of this to any one."

"Enough, my child, your word is ever truth; now, lady, trust yourself and your boy with those for whom I can answer; to-morrow we will take further measures to put you beyond the hazard of any alarm."

Carefully and kindly they led their guest to the small sleeping apartment which they had arranged for her. Theresa prepared

some posset, and had soon the satisfaction of leaving mother and child to their repose.

The party was once more assembled round the hearth. "Thumelda," said Krantz, "you have promised, and I can rely upon your discretion, but Konrad's desertion of you this day, has given me no favourable opinion of his; ruin may overtake us all, by one light word; now to bed, my child, tomorrow at sunrise, I shall tax your obedience, be ready for a journey; as we go on our way, I will explain its object, God bless you."

Thumelda kissed her parents, received their nightly blessing, and having made the necessary arrangements for the early journey of the morning, soon forgot her transient disturbances in sleep. Not so with those who remained. "Theresa," said the miller, "we must be alert, there is much to be cared for, but first I will arouse our faithful Schultz, and take him into our

councils ; we can and must rely upon his assistance, there is more in this matter than I can watch and ward myself, and all must be secure before the morning breaks, busy yourself awhile in assorting these wet garments, and I will return with him." His wife nodded assent, and supplying him with a light, proceeded to arrange all things after the unusual interruption of their ordinarily calm evenings, while Krantz cautiously mounted a back stair which led to Schultz's chamber over the offices. Her work was barely completed when her husband returned, accompanied by the old man, who entered wondering, and seated himself on the settle, evidently feeling that chill which the being suddenly aroused from sleep occasions. He was a man sometime past his prime, but his was the vigorous old age of temperance and of a healthy conscience, and although he had not passed through life unscathed by sorrow, he had meekly bowed

to the will of God. There was an anxious and careful cast over his countenance, which did not express cunning, but the sharpness of good intellect and acute feeling ;—the latter subdued by the necessity of self control.

“ Come, dame,” said Krantz, “ as I have thus untimely awakened our good Schultz from his slumbers, we must brace him for his labours, with a mulled cup from yonder flask, and some spiced toast ; we will talk of business while he does justice to your brewing.”

Schultz had formerly held the situation of butler at the castle, but upon the accession of the new dynasty was not unwilling to accept the dismissal which was dispensed to all its old retainers ; since which time he had found a happy asylum with his good friend the miller, whom he had nursed in childhood, proffering such small services about the mill as his age could compass, and as were required, or suited his

pleasure. The sudden call at this late hour had puzzled and alarmed him; these apprehensions were by no means diminished when Krantz detailed the events of the day and evening, he exclaimed, while emptying the wine cup, "Bless us, is it possible? but who can the lady be?" When the miller concluded by mentioning the evidence of the cross, the old man bowed forward his head upon his hands, and the fast tears trickled plentifully through his lean fingers; sobs forced themselves from his breast, and long passed scenes and fondly cherished recollections were recalled to memory and rushed through his thoughts in painful review. The living pictures of those no more, stood in gay array as he had known them in younger, and in happier times, in all the panoply of health and beauty, of hope and innocent mirth; and where are they now? and what remains of these by-gone scenes? Nothing. He was passing

to the grave without a ray of hope for their renewal

The miller left him for a time to his emotions, then gently laying his hand on his shoulder, said, "Come, Schultz, another cup, and then we must to work without delay, or gray morn will surprise us ere we note its coming."

The old man took the draught offered,—he needed it, for in those brief moments of indulged retrospection, he had lived his life again. He arose, and resolutely casting away his renewed sorrow, said; "I am ready to do your bidding, and Heaven grant us success."

"It is clear," said Krantz, "that the stranger's residence here must remain unknown. To send her hence in safety and unseen, would be more than difficult; as you know spies, ever the agents of suspicion, are not wanting hereabouts, and this most unfortunate encounter of the Baron with

Thumelda will bring them more frequently on the heath. Thanks to the mist and the storm, rude as it is, her coming may have escaped observation ; not so will her departure ; she must remain *hère*."

"Remain here," exclaimed Schultz, "that will ensure detection. How can a woman and a child be harboured on these premises, so that none about the mill shall see them, and gossip the news in the village?"

"More easily, my old friend, than you imagine, and here it is that you must assist me." Thus saying, he took up the lamp, carefully shading it with his hand, so that no rays might pass through the chinks of the door or shutters, and proceeding to the further end of the kitchen, he removed a few dishes from some shelves above a dresser which ran along that side of the room, and touching a spring, some portion of it folded back, and discovered behind a low door.

"Now, Theresa, do you remain behind ;

place your light out of view of the window, in the chimney corner, and await our return. If you hear aught moving, reclose the door, and let no one in, although none are likely to visit us at this hour."

He then proceeded, followed by Schultz. A few steps brought them into a passage, three or four more upwards into an apartment of tolerable dimensions, but somewhat encumbered by various old tackle and ropes pertaining to the mill, now out of use.

"Here," said Krantz, "I propose to conceal my guest, the door which you see on the opposite side, leads into a similar passage, and a few stairs conduct to a trap door which opens into the mill. It has been out of use, and is hidden by lumber. This retreat is known only to Theresa and myself; our present business is to stow away this tackle in one corner, where there is ample space, and make it as comfortable a habitation for the present, as time permits. I dare not

remove this rubbish into the mill, lest I should excite suspicion. Now to work." Anon they busied themselves with good will.

"But surely," said Schultz, "you do not intend they should sleep on the boards?"

"Wait awhile," said Krantz, "Theresa will manage that. Catharine is never employed upstairs, or much in the house, and we can easily bring hither such things as are requisite for their comfort. Wait you here, finish what remains to be done,—I will be back immediately."

The miller quickly returned with all appliances for disturbing the congregated dust and cobwebs, and having completed his operations to his satisfaction, he took his lamp and apparatus, followed by his companion. "Now, Theresa, we need your help, we must furnish our lodging." Beds, tables and stools were speedily transferred to the chamber, and the whole made as

comfortable as the short time allowed. Still Schultz pondered and looked distressed.

“After all,” he said, “it is a dungeon, shut out from the light of day, and the sweet breath of the hill.”

“Not quite so bad,” replied Krantz; he slid aside a small panel and added: “This is little enough, I confess, to admit these blessings, but carefully used, a small portion may be enjoyed, and when such is the case we must guard against curious and prying eyes. Now Theresa must complete her work; two more journeys and all will be ready. I must hereafter see to the upper trap, and secure an egress that way without endangering discovery.”

The trio were again in consultation; it was agreed that Krantz should depart soon after daybreak in his light waggon to Kemnitz, taking Thumelda with him; purchase such changes of garments as would be abso-

lutely needful for their guest, and secretly bring back Thumelda to share their confinement.

“ Now, Theresa, it lacks but an hour of dawn ; you must arouse the lady, explain to her the necessity of speedy removal, while I awake Thumelda, for Catherine will soon be astir.”

CHAPTER II.

ERE the gray morn had fully dawned, the miller's guest was safe in the chamber, having partaken of a light repast, the sleeping boy removed, and Thumelda seated by her father in a waggon drawn by two stout nags, on their way to Kemnitz.

Krantz kept his word, and explained to Thumelda his plans and wishes.

After they had arrived, having cared for the horses, and partaken of refreshment at the house of a near relation of Krantz's, they set

forth to make their various purchases. Having completed these, they proceeded to the post house, whence the only diligence, then in use, a covered waggon, departed ; Krantz caused Thumelda's name to be entered at the post house, then made a sudden turn when they reached the market place, and deposited her for a while with his relation.

“Do not stir hence, Thumelda, for I doubt there is one from the castle who from some motive hath dodged us.”

On returning he encountered the same man, who was lounging at the door of a wine shop ; he was willing to pass on hastily, but the other had no such intention.

“Ha ! if I mistake not, you are Krantz the miller, whither so fast ?”

“On business, my lad, though 'tis no matter of yours to put questions to passengers.”

“The keen air of the morning has not smoothed your temper, Master miller, I

could well bestow a cup of mine host's Rheinish here to brighten your humour, and pledge a health to the fair Thumelda, and a safe journey home."

"I need no such spur to sharpen my wits, my friend, nor do I wish my daughter's name to be mixed in drunkard cups by libertine lips."

"Ah! ah!" said the fellow, "there goes an unsocial dog, who perches himself on his mill like a scare-crow on the top of a cherry tree with a clapper in his hand, to frighten gay birds from the tempting fruit, but I doubt there are some who will bring him from his altitude, and taste his fruit spite of his clatter."

The miller's quick ears caught the speaker's words as he passed on; he lost no time in seeking Thumelda, arranged his packages, and placing her under sundry sheaves of corn, made the best of his way homewards.

As towards evening he wound slowly up the hill, he perceived more than one

figure moving before his house. To wait or retreat was impossible, as they no doubt had already discerned his approach ; there was no resource therefore, but to put the best face upon it, and continue his pace. He whispered to Thumelda to remain quiet until she was released ; and driving leisurely into the yard, he backed his waggon near the steps of the mill, and calling to Carl to take charge of the cattle, proceeded round to the front of the house.

The first object which saluted his sight, was the tall figure of the Baron, clad in a hunting suit of green, in conversation with Theresa ; a glance, quickly exchanged with his wife, assured him that all within was safe, but caution necessary. Krantz respectfully removed his cap, and said sharply to Theresa ; “ How is it that you suffer the Baron to stand on the threshold of our door ? ”

“ I crave his Lordship’s pardon,” replied Theresa, “ but unused to such an honour my

good manners have not kept pace with my wish to acknowledge the distinction."

The Baron willingly accepted the apology and as his object was to insinuate, replied, "I, faith, my good friend Krantz, you give not much encouragement, as I hear, to your neighbours to seek your hospitality, for if report be true, you rarely pay your duty at the castle, or pledge its Lord's health there in wassail bowl."

"In truth my lord, to this I plead guilty ; I can rarely be spared from the mill, except on some such errand as to day, which combined business with the fulfilment of a promise, and to bring grist from the market, for my merry-go-round."

"Methinks your duty might have balanced your promise, and drawn you with others to greet our return ; but no more of this ; I am somewhat warm and weary with the chase, and shall trench on your dairy, or your cellar, for a bowl of milk, or a cup of wine.

Here, Ludwig send the rest of your fellows home, and the dogs to their kennels; doubtless no man is more able than our miller to fill the manger for our steeds; in the meantime I shall crave our Dame Theresa's hospitality to give a hungry man some refreshment, and her fair daughter shall be the Hebe to give zest to a glass of Rhenish."

"Such as our larder can furnish is at my Lord's service; and Krantz no doubt will seek a flask of that rare old wine, the present of our late Lord, when he hailed the birth of his daughter."

For a moment a thunder cloud passed over the Baron's dark brow, but quickly assuming a bland smile, he said:

"Be it so, Dame, but do not forget that your daughter must be the cupbearer, and impart that flavour which may have somewhat evaporated by age."

"I trust, Baron," replied Krantz, "you

may find it as palatable, as if Thumelda were here to offer her dutiful service."

"Why, how his this," cried the Baron ; "you suffer your gay bird to wanton where she lists with unclipped wings ? I was told that you were more chary of the maiden."

Krantz bit his lips, and his brawny arm was tremulous with anger at the speech of the bold Baron ; his ruddy face crimsoned deeply ; but as calmly as he could, he replied : "My gay bird, as you are pleased to term her Baron, is no wanton of gaudy plumage ; nor does she need that her feathers should be spoiled or trimmed, to keep her within the dove cot, when hawks hover nigh ; she is more likely to wing her flight homewards, for escape from such a danger ; she is not here ; ere this she is many a long league from hence, nor likely to return awhile ;" and immediately added—"Now Theresa, my old Rhenish must make its apology for the scantiness of your larder, which truth to

say, presents no semblance of a holiday feast; and I trust its flavour will convince the Baron that it has lost none of its spirit in the keeping, for so honoured an occasion."

Krantz went in quest of the wine, casting a sly glance of caution to Theresa, who attended her unwelcome guest with an assumed air of simplicity.

"So I suppose," carelessly observed the Baron, "you feared the gay gallants down yonder, Dame Theresa, and thought some leagues might as well be put between gallantry and beauty."

"My Lord, we could not apprehend danger to Thumelda from the great folks at the castle. Krantz has long promised that she should visit her aunt, and he ever keeps his word."

"Humph," muttered the Baron.

At this moment Schultz hastily rushed in, and whispered to Theresa.

A smile of incredulity curled the Baron's

lip, but Theresa said aloud ; “Schultz you must tell Krantz ; but here he comes. Krantz give me the flask ; there is something wrong at the mill, and Schultz waits your orders to set matters right.”

“Confound their stupid heads,” said Krantz ; “thus it ever is ; one would think the wind would not blow, if I were not there to whistle for it ; excuse me Baron.” He then dashed out of the kitchen, well aware that Schultz would not have volunteered into the Baron’s presence upon a bootless errand : but what was his consternation when he saw one of his men and the Count’s attendant mounted on the waggon, and busily employed in handing the sheaves into the mill. “Oh oh ! there,” he cried in haste, “who bade you sirrah to do work and seek assistance without an order ?”

“So I told them,” said Schultz, “but they called me an old fool for my pains.”

The men descended from the waggon.

“Why master,” said Carl, “I thought you would like the corn housed afore night, and there is small daylight to spare.”

“Peace, sirrah, know you not that the loft is nearly full, and that I never mix my neighbour’s corn; what if it be damaged? It is not you will pay the cost: go and see that Ludwig hath provender for his master’s cattle, and when it needs, we shall soon make light of handing a few sheaves into the granary. Schultz, be it your care to give Ludwig to drink success to the mill.” Schultz understood, and kept the officious, but in this instance, well meaning Ludwig fully employed over the foaming tankard.

Poor Thumelda during this time, had been in no enviable position; she had heard the altercation between Schultz and the men; each moment she dreaded a discovery, and its results to her father; however, obedient to his injunctions, she had remained per-

fectly still. Her position was by no means conducive to personal comfort; she was cramped from the long confinement; and although her father in loading the waggon, had contrived to leave a space around her, the high pile of straw rendered her abode most uncomfortably warm, and almost suffocating.

Ere the miller's return, the Baron, still doubting, had expressed a desire to inspect the house and mill. Here was another dilemma, and Krantz was at his wits' end to rid himself of his guest; however having pressed the Baron with all the cordiality he could assume to honour again his prized wine, he handed him the cup.

"Your wine, my friend, is not so mortal as I thought: it has retained its strength in its old age"—and rising, he unceremoniously threw open the door of the small parlour; but there was no evidence of recent female occupation. Some things had evidently been

cast aside in haste, which gave further confirmation to the miller's assertion that Thumelda was absent.

The Baron's curiosity for an inspection of the mill was fast evaporating, when a horseman was seen crossing the heath, who quickly drew rein at the door. This was the man, Krantz had encountered in the town. He dismounted, and doffing his cap, handed some sealed packets to his master. The miller moved to a short distance, when the man whispered to the Baron: "my Lord, the fox on the hill-side has been too sharp for us: our bird has flown."

"How know you this, sirrah?"

"Why, while waiting till the arrival of your lordship's messenger early this morning, I saw them arrive. I dodged them awhile, but in the market place which was unusually crowded, lost sight of them. I saw him afterwards leave the town alone."

“Think you he left her there?”

“No, my lord, for when I went to the post-house, to seek that larger packet, I found her name inserted in the book for travellers; the waggon was gone.”

“Enough,” said the Baron.

He hastily scanned his letters, and whatever might be the news they contained, it did not seem to afford him much satisfaction. Giving the man orders to arouse Ludwig from his potations, and bring round the horses, he called to the miller “Krantz, I must defer my visit to your mill; I have news which demands my immediate presence at the castle; hurry that knave; your beer seems stronger than his sense of duty.”

We may imagine that Krantz did not loiter, but lent a willing hand to girth and buckle, and in two minutes he had the satisfaction of holding the stirrup for the Baron to mount. He remained, however, on the spot

till they disappeared at the bottom of the hill. Old Schultz now joined him.

“ Well, what now, Schultz?”

“ Why this, master: you will not have much help from that stupid fellow Carl, he is now well nigh drunk.”

“ So much the better,” said Krantz, let him finish the tankard and put a night-cap on his senses, we will trust to a heavy sleep to bring back the stray donkies; let me know when his head reels faster than the mill sails in a gale. Call in Gantz from the mill, and bid him drink to the Baron’s health, and I will see to release my hidden treasure.”

Krantz advanced to the waggon, whistled cheerily, and pretending to examine the contents whispered, “ all’s well.”

Schultz now appeared with Gantz.

“ Gantz,” said Krantz, “ you are a steady lad, go with Schultz who will give you wherewithal to lighten your work, for I must demand a later labour than usual from

you in unloading the waggon ; but tarry not to drown your senses in the tankard. Schultz, tell Theresa I need a cup of wine, and that she must employ Catharine for a few minutes in the house."

Having thus secured himself from observation, the miller lost no time in removing some of the load to the forepart of the waggon, so as to form a screen ; then releasing Thumelda, handed her up the ladder, let her down by the trap from which Schultz had removed its heavier incumbrances, and replaced the corn in its original state. This done a loudly whistled tune told that all was right. The corn was deposited in one of the granaries, the packages handed into the house, and the miller breathed more freely than he had done that day.

" I have had an anxious and a hard day's work, Theresa. How fares the lady ?"

" As far as I know," replied she, " well and comfortable, and I doubt not will find

a companion welcome, more especially such a one as our Thumelda. Hang that Baron's prying eyes, they were every where, but thank Heaven he is on a wrong scent, he little thinks his lost game roosts so near."

Krantz, while he took a hasty meal, then related the adventures of the day.

"Well, Schultz, I think this night we may take needful rest; I would fain give our prisoners some fresh air and exercise, but this I dare not do as yet, and we shall find occupation for them in the various purchases we have brought with us. Here are toys for the little one; we must contrive now to visit them, or the boy will go supperless to bed."

Theresa quickly stored the basket, with a bottle of warm milk, and more than was required, in case accident might delay the morning's supply. Catherine was dismissed for the night; the various packages were

quickly handed to Theresa, and the entrance closed, until she should give the signal for her return.

She found the small group seated round the table ; tears filled her eyes as she gazed on the beautiful and elegant stranger, and the lovely boy who was sporting on Thumelda's knee. Her guest arose, and advancing to her said—"How, my good Theresa, shall I thank you?" and leaning on the dame's shoulder, her tears fell fast. Theresa wisely remained silent until this natural burst had passed, then, gently leading her back to a seat, brought in the various packages.

"Thumelda can best produce her stores in due order," observed she, "for I conclude she has not been silent on to day's adventures, but I mistake, if she has not provided occupation for herself to while away the hours of confinement."

"And for me she is thus imprisoned," responded the lady.

“By no means,” rejoined Theresa.

Now, in truth, Thumelda in her maidenly modestly, had touched lightly on the scene at the village, but Theresa soon convinced the fair prisoner that Thumelda’s temporary confinement was most prudent for all parties.

The lady protested her competency to assist Thumelda in the various arrangements which would be necessary for an addition to the wardrobe of mother and child, and while thus occupied, noting down what would further be required, and preparing to spread their light supper, and other similar matters, we will leave them.

“Schultz,” observed Krantz, “I promised Thumelda that I would see that witless fellow Konrad to day ; this I have not been able to do, but you must seek him early, and bid him to the mill, at the hour of our noon meal ; love hath addled the brain of this youth and——”

At this moment a tap at the door arrested the eloquent miller, who arose and touched a wire, which, communicating with a small bell, gave Theresa notice not to return until the signal was repeated. He then hastened to undo the latch.

“Oh ho ! my good sir,” exclaimed Krantz, addressing a youth who stood rather irresolutely in the door way, “methinks you have chosen the owl’s dawn for your visit ; what brings you at an hour when drowsy people are forestalling their dreams ?”

Konrad, little assured by this welcome, made a step in retreat, for by this time he had advanced into the middle of the room ; shame, love, and anger were confusedly mixed and harassing his thoughts, and he replied doggedly ; “my welcome, master Krantz, is rather such as that bird of night gives ; it savours more of a hoot than a friendly hail ; but I have heard strange tidings in the village, and I am come to know

how far I may credit the reports, and learn the truth from you."

"Humph," said Krantz with a sly smile, "what news, my brave bird, do you bring from the church steeple?"

"This," replied Konrad, "that you have sent Thumelda away, no one knows whither."——

"Sure enough," said Krantz, "nor will they, for reasons of my own; but what of this Konrad? have you climbed the hill to reach this knowledge?"

Konrad affronted at Krantz's sneering look and manner, boldly answered—

"I am come, master Krantz to say, that I think myself hardly used, that Thumelda should be spirited away; and that I should hear the tale from one of the half drunken brawlers of the castle whom I chanced to meet, and who had been making acquaintance with your ale tankard."

"Good my lad; did you expect that I was to despatch a carrier pigeon with a bur-

thened wing, to tell you that Thumelda's parents, for good reasons of their own, willed that she should leave, for a time, a neighbourhood no longer safe for her?"

"I should have expected," retorted Konrad, "that chance would not have given me possession of the knowledge of her absence, because I am her betrothed, because, whatever your reasons, I might have been trusted, because——"

"Tut man," interrupted Krantz, "upon my life a most trustworthy champion, a most watchful shepherd, who leaves his young lamb as soon as he sees the wolf prepared to invade the fold. Mark you, young man," and the miller abandoning his sarcastic manner, pressed Konrad's arm nervously, and looking full in his face, said sorrowfully and seriously; "you have betrayed your trust; that trust reposed confidently in you by Thumelda's parents, who were weak enough, as it has proved, to

confide the darling of their hearts to your care to join yesterday's revels in the village. What did you but abandon the maiden to the libertine pursuit of a man, whom the world deems not over scrupulous when beauty meets his gaze? In a petulant fit of jealousy for which she gave you no cause, you left the side of her whom you had passed your word to guard. With decent discretion she left the scene of danger, where she felt she had no protector; thanks be to that discretion which has possibly saved *her* whom you deserted. Such conduct merits neither Thumelda's continued love as its reward, nor her parent's trust as the safe guardian of her purity."

"Oh! master Krantz," replied Konrad, "why did Thumelda consent to listen, and join the dance as she did?"

"And who, impetuous youth, was to gainsay that haughty Baron, who holds all on his lands as vassals to his will? a simple

maiden? She did what modest maiden could do, but she had no gallant youth to back her repugnance, or lead her from the scene of danger. Thumelda's hand must be bestowed on one who can command his passions, and protect her in the hour of danger."

"Oh Heaven!" cried the unhappy youth, "do you mean to say that you have sent her from home to sever the bond of union between us, and that she has consented to such a separation?"

"I do mean this," replied the miller firmly; "and she has consented willingly to our wishes to be parted from you, and saved from him; and you must act differently, and mould your mind to some self-command, ere yonder village bells shall peel for your marriage rites with child of mine."

Konrad flung himself in despair on a seat, and crossing his hands on its back, hid his face in anguish. For a time he remained motionless, then looking up with

grief in every feature, and placing his hand in the miller's, exclaimed: "Master Krantz, I have been wrong, very wrong, and humbly crave your pardon and that of my beloved one. I now see all the consequences of my mad jealousy. It was base, most base, that I should suffer any circumstance to cause a betrayal of my trust."

He arose,—and with a voice almost choked by sorrow, said: "Master Krantz, let not Thumelda hate and despise me; I will yet prove myself worthy of her love and forgiveness, and of your friendship;" and snatching his bonnet from the floor, he rushed from the house.

CHAPTER III.

THE morning was young and fresh; the lark was giving out his sweet song in the blue sky above. A delicious perfume was exhaled from the blooming heath, wild thyme, and yellow furze, while the mill lazily made its turns, catching the gentle breeze in its ponderous sails, which flung their alternate shadows on the short, thick, dewy grass.

The miller was watching their heavy rounds, and stood leaning against the porch

of his cottage, with folded arms. He was calm, but his countenance was not free from anxious thought ; so absorbed was he, that until another shadow lay before his feet, he was unconscious that any one approached ; he looked up, and old Hilda's querulous voice saluted him with a "Good day, Master Krantz."

"How now, dame, you and yon warbler," pointing to the twittering bird above him, "seem to have kept company up the hill ; but welcome !"

"Ah marry," returned she, "my old legs do feel that even ground suits them best ; but I have a good help here," holding up a strong crutch to the miller's view. "It supports me, and does not complain of an old woman's company ; always ready at hand, and never wearies or wears out as we do, Master Krantz."

"Ah ah," replied Krantz smiling, "no doubt a steady, sturdy friend, but not much

of a companion for conversation; eh! Dame?"

"Alas! master, I need not to talk nor listen; I have enough to think about;—and sorry thought it be. Who cares for what an old woman, and a poor one, has to say, or to trouble her?"

This was said so mournfully, that Krantz, whose heart was tender, who knew how hard poor Hilda's fate had been, for she had seen more prosperous days, and had outlived all she cared for, and was indeed alone, poor and old, kindly said, "I do, Hilda, and so do my wife and daughter."

"Ah! God bless them," said the old woman; "often have they kept starvation from my door; and I will say, master, you have been a kind friend to me."

Now this was the truth; and Hilda was sincere in her gratitude to those, who had often soothed and relieved her; yet the tone in which she spoke, convinced the miller she had some boon or assistance to crave, and that such was her object in her early visit

to the mill. Though a good creature, she was not devoid of cunning,—the weapon of ignorance and a feeble understanding,—used by the young to fill the void of sense, and by the aged, to cover decayed intellect.

“Come, Hilda, rest awhile in the porch, and I will seek Theresa; for you shall not go down the hill as you have come up—fasting.”—Hilda’s eyes brightened, and she composed herself on the bench, leaning her hands across her crutch; rejoiced to find the miller for a few moments, previous to his breakfast, at leisure, and in so kind a humour: truth to say, he was rarely otherwise. Hilda looked down on the village, and whether languor from fatigue, or that the blooming morning and the peaceful scene below, were contrasted in her mind with all the sorrows she had known and witnessed, in that now tranquil spot, or her own decay in helpless poverty unnerved her, the tears silently stole down her furrowed cheeks.

“Come, Dame,” said Krantz, as returning he offered his arm to assist her, “the morning meal is ready, and will be none the less welcome to us for your company.”

“Thanks, thanks, master Krantz;” and indeed she was truly grateful for the exchange of the dry crust and water, which her own scanty means would have given her, for the fresh though homely loaf, sweet butter, and new milk. “And so, master, thy Thumelda is away, and poor Konrad well nigh broken-hearted. Poor youth!”

“Dame,” replied the miller, “we will not touch on that; Konrad has earned his punishment.”

“Ah! well I have not seen him, and I am glad of it; for,” she added in a low and sad tone, “what good could I do him?”

The breakfast was finished.

“Well, Schultz,” said Krantz rising, “it is time we were on the move; it is rent day at the Castle, and I am willing to be the first to offer the tribute by which I hold the

mill, as well as the first to return.—Come, Dame, as you have had a long toil this morning, you shall take my place in the cart.” The old woman looked uneasy. “Why master,” she said, “I will wait awhile with your wife. What have I to return to, but an empty cottage, and the boards for my bed ; if even a roof be granted, to shelter my poor old head ?”

“How is this ?” said Krantz.

“Alas !” replied she, “I cannot pay even my small rent, and they say they will take all,—that I may beg or borrow ;—that rent or service they will have.”

“And why, Dame, did you not say this before ?”

“Shame ! Master Krantz, shame ! to beg of you, who were so kind to me in the winter, when I could neither knit nor spin to earn a few groschens.”

“Yet,” said the miller, “you must have come with some such intention.”

“Perhaps I did, master, but I knew not how to speak it.”

“Well, well,” said Krantz, “we must contrive to save you from this.” So saying, he gave the old woman the small sum due for the rent of her cottage, with a trifle beyond, and seeing Schultz with the cart and its load at the door, carefully placed old Hilda in it with a loaf by her side, and pursued his way to the Castle, making Hilda promise to keep secret that he had aided her. He put her down at a short distance from the Castle gates, which he entered in order to perform a most unwilling duty. Having delivered his flour, he was directed to the hall to receive his acquittance. Here were some few of the vassals and retainers assembled.

In the centre was a long oaken table, surmounted by substantial fare,—huge pies, solid joints, boars’ heads, flagons of wine with foaming tankards.

The miller was not tempted to forego his

resolution never to partake of viand, or raise a cup to his lips in the Castle; and having received the acknowledgment that he had delivered his tribute, he was quitting the Castle yard, when the Baron issued from a side portal; his brow was more than usually dark, as he turned to the miller, and said sneeringly: "there goes an honest man, who holds some of our broad lands, and brings a bag of dust to blind us to his gains."

Krantz's natural temper was impetuous, but he was wise, and knew too well how much depended on his forbearance. Respectfully he removed his cap and said calmly: "Sir Baron, your forefathers willed it so, and granted to mine an indulgence for service which they believed claimed some reward. Industry and labour have redeemed the small grant from a barren waste, and rebuilt the mill, the tribute from which I have, in remembrance of such a boon, gratefully offered anon."

“Tribute enough, Master Krantz, to make cakes for the maidens’ breakfasts to-morrow, if perchance the keen air of the morning doth not provide them with sharp appetites.”

The Baron then haughtily moved on.

“Why, old sack,” quoth the insolent Hartorff, who had followed in the Baron’s wake, as Krantz was retreating, “the noble Baron is willing to make a butt of you, but I doubt if such a one were broached, we should find more skim milk than wine, more chaff than either.”

“If my stout arm, Lieutenant, be provoked to disgorge from thy nose some of the ruby tints acquired in its constant contact with the wine cup, I marvel not but it will improve the beauty of thy face.”

As Hartorff’s nasal organ bore strong evidence of his attachment to the flagon, and as he was a quarrelsome chap, who did not hesitate to do his master’s bidding, however foul the deed, the bystanders laughed approval at the retort.

“Go to, old sack, and mix some of your hot blood with your chaff for your supper; we lack not such coarse fare here.”

“Hold thy peace, drunkard, or although I am little disposed to it, I must match my blows to your bandy legs; faith, Master Hartorff, these good fellows might mistake, that they were given in compliment to them,” responded the miller, looking down upon Hartorff’s misshapen supports with contempt.

Another laugh, and the discomfiture of the brawler gave the miller the opportunity of passing the gates without further annoyance.

“Ah!” he sighed as he slowly wound his way up the hill, in his course homeward, “how distasteful to me are now those Castle walls,—the once happy scene of my boyhood,—within whose precincts every domestic joy was centered, within whose portals dwelt all that was pure, all that was noble, true and good; where the aged were suc-

coured, the young encouraged, the erring reclaimed, reproved, but not condemned, valour and worth requited, and virtue rewarded. Alas ! that all should pass away, and its halls which once rang with the songs of innocent mirth, should now echo the strains of coarse revelry, and the boastings of dark deeds, which honest men quail to hear of. How mournfully do those banners, the ensigns of birth, and the trophies of gallantry wave their shadows over the riot of their dissolute inmates. My masters, friends, companions, and playmates, where are ye ? Swept away as if Heaven, in its mercy, would not leave one honest heart to break over the desecration of its harbour and its home. Castle walls ! I still venerate ye for the inmates ye once held, and grieve that thus ye are desolated. Within your towers my infancy was reared, my youth instructed by the generosity of thy noble-hearted owner, who did not disdain that the soldier's son should share with

his own his graver studies and his leisure hours, and in his generous gratitude, would not believe, that ignorance was needful to make a humble and a poor man an honest or industrious one: gratitude, my honoured patrons shall never cease to your memory, while the poor miller's heart beats with one feeble pulse of life."

Krantz's sad retrospections were interrupted by the appearance of Ludwig descending the hill.

"Well, master Krantz, hast been returning thy compliments to the tankard at the Castle? Either thy head is stronger than mine, the Baron's ale weaker, or the hum of thy mill set mine a spinning, for to my fancy the trees took a liking to the tune, and danced me fairly off my legs."

"None of these, my friend, but I never trust my head with more than my legs can help it to carry."

"Oh! but with us soldiers," said Ludwig

drawing himself up, with an air of superiority, "war and wine are twin brothers. You do not want such grist to set your top on the heath a twirling."

"I was a soldier once," said Krantz with a sigh, "but never found that wine braced my arm, or relieved my fatigue."

Ludwig looked at the miller with surprise and more respect.

"Why hang it," said he, "I thought there was something of the gentleman about you."

Krantz smiled, and with a "good day" and a nod left Ludwig to reconcile his former trade of war, his habits of sobriety, and his present occupation as best he could.

Theresa's cheerful face and affectionate smile awaited him, and while they were eating their mid-day meal, she told her husband that Ludwig on some pretence had been loitering about the mill,—whether for idleness, or to spy, she could not say,—but

although civil to him, she had given him no encouragement to repeat the visit ; notwithstanding he had hinted that the day was hot, the hill long, and the ale not unworthy a soldier's notice, she did not offer him more than a horn of beer.

“Thou hast acted with thine accustomed prudence, Theresa ; I fear me I have conducted myself less wisely.” He then detailed to her the events of the morning during his short absence.

Some days passed on, and all things went forward as usual. The stranger and Thumelda lightened the hours by occupation. The gay temper and lively sallies of the latter, drew sometimes a smile from her companion. Each day added some little comfort to their abode, but they impatiently longed to enjoy the fresh air, which could be but scantily admitted, and only at night, through the small concealed aperture, which Krantz had more effectually hidden by twining some

ivy on that side of the house. The child too lost its rosy hue and plump cheeks, and the mothers' fears for its health, robbed her of repose; but she uttered no complaint, well assured of the devotion of those to whom she had intrusted their safety.

Gantz had gathered at the village, and had accidentally let fall to Schultz, that the Castle was likely for a time to lose its gay revellers, when they might with due caution at night be released for a time. The miller was also anxious to make another journey to the town, in order to procure further requisites, but feared to leave his precious charge. Schultz would be a faithful substitute or messenger, but his age could not supply activity in case of need. Patience, therefore, for a time was a necessity which none of the party denied. Krantz had seen nothing of Konrad; he was with his parents at the pastor's house he knew, but the youth had made no effort to seek those whom he had offended, and Krantz

gave him credit for the feeling that anger against himself, and mortification at his own folly had kept him away, and not resentment towards those who had shewn him unvaried kindness, and had been willing to trust their child's happiness to his keeping.

The sun was just glancing its farewell light on the distant hills, and Krantz was watching its last rays ere it finally sank behind the blue barriers which bounded the prospect, when Konrad's light figure appeared at some distance crossing the heath. In a few minutes he was by his side. The anxious expression of his countenance told that his mind had been ill at ease. Krantz, who loved the youth, kindly held out his hand, which the other warmly took and said : " Master Krantz, I have that to tell which may create surprise to you and my good mother Theresa ; and perhaps may draw further condemnation from your lips ; but when I tell you, that I have the approval of

my parents for my course of action, I am sure you will pause, ere you condemn the step which I have taken." Krantz nodded for him to proceed. "Accident," continued Konrad, "led me some days since to join the Baron in the chase; I was, perhaps, the most successful in tracking and hunting down the game; he warmly praised my wood craft, and so entreated me to return with him to the Castle, that neither in courtesy, nor without making an enemy who is implacable under any affront, could I refuse; however reluctantly, I was compelled to comply. He was condescending, nay, even as gracious as a haughty man can be, but I left the Castle without a wish ever to be again his guest. I kept out of his way, but while absent wandering on the hills was sent for, then sought for, and found. He had not, he observed, been much of late in this part of the country, and added, that I knew better the haunts of the game than his own people, who in truth appear to me to be all

strangers, and requested my assistance. Hoping this service would not be of long continuance, with less reluctance I complied. Much as I was disgusted with the proceedings I witnessed at his board, I gleaned a knowledge which determined me to accept an offer, that he made me, to accompany him to Magdeburg, whither he is going to join Duke Maurice. Master Krantz, he loves you not; you have thwarted him in his lawless pursuit of my beloved Thumelda. An honest man can find no favour in his eyes; he thinks to practise on my youth and inexperience, and mould me as a companion to his taste; but he little knows the talisman of virtue which I wear in my heart; in my devotion to Thumelda; nor has he taken the trouble to inquire into those principles which since my lips could first lisp a prayer, have been instilled into my mind. His associates are beneath him in birth and education, and even he has hours of lassitude which their ribaldry

cannot amuse. In gentle blood, I am far beneath him ; in manly sports as in courage his equal ; more than his equal in mental attainments ; in the knowledge of arms, from the peaceful life which I have hitherto led, entirely his inferior. Thus I have drawn the balance ; my mad desertion of Thumelda on that fatal morning at the village fête, has left him in ignorance of our attachment, and his people are too little loved, and too much suspected, to be encouraged among our sober neighbours."

"Suffer me, Konrad, to interrupt you ; be not too confident in your own strength ; such scenes of disorder, no doubt, at first will disgust, but habit will familiarize them, and ultimately you may be drawn into the vortex, when, with less vigour, you nerve yourself to stem the tide ; and why encounter this danger, which exposes your young imagination to such temptation, and your virtuous mind to such pollution ?"

“Such thoughts, my kind monitor, believe me, have presented themselves to me. I have doubted my own strength, and have weighed well your arguments, not alone by the aid of my own reason, but with the assistance of my excellent father, and thus I answer them. Each day I have been more disgusted with scenes uncongenial to my taste, and which to me can never be otherwise ; they are utterly discordant with every feeling of my heart, or principle of my mind. By courtly scenes of fascinating dissipation, I feel I might be shaken or seduced, but low ribaldry, coarse jests, and rude manners, I am as proof against as our knights in their coats of mail are invulnerable to untempered weapons. In mind and education, as I have said, I am the Baron’s master, and my object is to remain so without his perceiving it. You ask me, why I take this step ? First, because I can better guard Thumelda if any unforeseen mischance throws her in his way ;

next, because I may do you service, for his haughty bearing and scowling brow on the rent day were not unnoticed, and there were tongues to repeat the worsting his favorite villain Hartorff got, when taking his master's tone, he backed it by his insulting jests ; and lastly, I feel that a peaceful life is not the one to suit my ambition, remaining an inactive burthen upon my parents. He will, at any rate lead me into service, where honour and renown may be found. This,—no unworthy ambition,—if no other motive impels me, will, I hope, save me from any snares which he may place in my path."

"Konrad," said Krantz, "your reasoning is specious, and would be sound, if maturer age ensured your firmness ; but you have chosen a rugged and dangerous pass for your onset in life, and every step must be carefully placed, if you would attain the reward you promise yourself. Never for a

moment relax your vigilant watch over yourself and him ; never place your head upon the pillow until your acts and thoughts shall have been as carefully scanned as a miser's hoard ; and let the first warning that you are deviating from the line of conduct you have laid down for yourself, sound the alarm ; need not a second warning, but fly nor look behind, leave the battle where victory is doubtful ; remember this, as you value my regard, the mercy, and the protection of Him on whose power and might you have been taught to rely."

The miller here reverently lifted the cap from his head, while he raised his eyes to that Heaven where thousands of the evidences of the power of their Creator were shining down upon them.

Konrad followed the miller's act of reverence, and replied : "so will I do ;—and solemnly, nightly, in weal or woe, not leave one act unchallenged."

For a few moments both were silent, then Krantz said, "when do you go?"

"To-morrow, my friend; may I not say adieu to your wife?"

Krantz briefly stated Konrad's purpose, telling Theresa he would inform her further by and by, but Konrad's time was short, and his parents could ill spare any portion of his last hours with them.

"Farewell, my kind, my first, my best friends, remember me, and convey to my beloved Thumelda all that the truest, fondest love can dictate." An embrace of Theresa,—a pressure of the miller's hand,—and Konrad again crossed the heath, and bade adieu to his second home.

CHAPTER IV.

AT an early hour of the morning, the Castle was astir ; the Baron diligently inspected his small band ; all the arms had been previously examined, and made fit for service, helmets, cuirasses, matchlocks, spears, and swords, polished from rust and stain, and further orders issued for the renovation of those not immediately required ; ten men only were to be left for this service, and the safe keeping of the Castle, besides a few varlets on the establishment. The courtyard for three days preceding had presented a busy

scene of preparation, everyone being anxious to secure the accoutrements most suited to his taste or vanity, each vying with the other to present himself at the final muster as a well ordered man at arms. It required some skill and patience to remove the wine stains from their doublets, and cunningly repair unsightly fractures. On the previous evening the muster roll had been called, and after the men had been finally dispatched to their quarters, the Baron sent for Hartorff. This Hartorff, as we have said before, possessed a kindred spirit with his master, who had selected him from a robber-band, to attend him on his marauding expeditions. He was a bold and fearless man, as reckless of bad deeds as of danger; his person was a faithful index to his character; his head was large, and amply supplied with black shaggy hair, which matched his swarthy visage, and tallied with the dark and sinister expres-

sion of his countenance ; unless aroused out of caution by his passions, he rarely lifted his eyes towards the persons whom he addressed, but slyly scanned them askance from under his pent brow ; his prominent features bore the marks of vicious dissipation and intemperance, he was high shouldered, his arms long, and his legs slightly bowed. Although above the ordinary stature, from his length of limb, he appeared taller than the truth.

“ Hartorff,” said the Baron, “ by the first streak of morning, we must prepare for our march ; I have promised to join the Elector with the least possible delay ; and although it ill suits me to move at this time, I am compelled to hasten my departure, and give the aid required ; hitherto you have been the companion of my dangers and my toils, but on this occasion, for reasons of my own, it is my wish to leave you here in charge ;—at least for a while.”

During this speech the Baron twirled his moustache between his finger and thumb, and looked mysterious. "If need arise hereafter, you can join me, if, as I expect, I should increase the number of my followers, and should require your services as my lieutenant."

Hartorff stood for a few moments in surprise, and then observed doggedly: "Sir Baron, when the leech administers a nauseous potion, he disguises the unpalatable flavour with spices, or gilds the bolus; I trust, if it be your pleasure that I shall sit crosslegged to sun myself on the ramparts, that you will leave a spinning wheel for my leisure hours, that there may be no lack of linen to bind the broken heads and limbs of such of my comrades, as may chance to find their way back; perhaps it would be as well to swell your ranks with striplings and women from the village, and leave such useless lumber as myself to tend the hen-

roosts, and sweep out the empty stables ; perchance you think the warlike Konrad a better guard and fitter counsellor than the puny Hartorff."

"Not so fast, Hartorff; I have told you I have my reasons," (again resorting to his moustache to give additional weight to his speech); "I doubt neither the strength of your arm, nor your willingness to use it in my defence, and in leaving you in command over this stronghold, I place you in a situation many of your comrades will envy."

"Ask them," replied Hartorff; "I'll bet a flagon you will not find a volunteer for such a command. Command in truth over ten men who can hardly draw a bowstring that would send an arrow the length of their shadows, with a craven set of menials who have fattened on the savour of their own grease pots and grains."

It was never the Baron's policy to ruffle his turbulent follower ; he observed there-

fore: "It may be allowed that the guard I leave behind are somewhat feeble from recent wounds and sickness, but this is a present ill; a short time, and they will be as fit to bear arms as any I take with me; with respect to the youth Konrad, I require him for other service."

"Ah! ah! I suppose with his fair face and smooth tongue, to decoy unwilling birds; but I doubt he will be more likely to keep the game he snares."

"I called you, Sir, to my presence," retorted the Baron sternly, "not to listen to your jeers,—keep those for your equals,—but to receive my orders and to test your obedience, not your scurrility; go and learn to write, and Konrad shall be left behind."

Hartorff loved to chafe his commander; but it often happened that his domineering did not answer his end; cringing, unless his assistance was immediately needed, was a

surer card ; he was not scrupulous in war, nor as to the manner in which he lined his doublet with gold, and as he loved the dissipation of a camp, he had fully determined to make one of the present expedition.

“ It is enough to break a man’s spirit,” said he, “ to be thrust out of his post and left in the rear like a disabled baggage-waggon, and to don his night-cap instead of his helmet ; who is to peer into the enemy’s camp ? who is to find forage where the country has been sacked for miles around ? who is to entice recruits, and fit them for the field, if Hartorff is to be stuck on these old Castle walls, like a spread jackdaw nailed to a barn door to frighten away small birds ? there are few nobles or knights who would gainsay Johann Hartorff, if he cared to leave a commander whom he has followed in many a hard pass, more than Johann Hartorff wists to tell, or than that commander mayhap would like to be known.”

“ True, Hartorff, I do not deny your qualities as a soldier, therefore I put this trust in you.”

“ It is not a trust to my liking, Baron,” he sullenly answered ; “ amongst sixty, methinks a fit man could be found to air himself behind the battlements, peep at the church steeple through the loop holes, dole out the watch-word, or overlook the scouring of rusty blades.”

“ But,” rejoined the Baron, “ you said anon, all were as unwilling as yourself to perform the office of seneschal.”

“ And so I did, of those who can draw a sword, but it needs not to thin the troop of one able man, to provide for defence where there is no danger. There is that hair-brained Ludwig, who got a fall last night in a wrestling match with that Goliah Schwartz,—after you had inspected the muster, and opened a new light to his understanding against the door post ; he will not

be sound and fit for service till that crack is stopped up ; he is as proper a man as any to keep company with bats and owls."

Two motives prompted Hartorff to this proposition,—his desire to be one of the party, and his jealousy of Ludwig, who, although not in his confidence, stood well in the Baron's favour, from his cheerful activity and ready courage.

"And where were you Hartorff," demanded the Baron, "when such idle pastimes were permitted on the eve of our departure?"

"With you, Sir," he quickly replied, "assorting, with the assistance of Hermann, your harness for to-morrow,—the last office, it seems, that you mean to require of Johann Hartorff."

"No more parley ;" said the Baron ; "send the leech to me, although I suppose Ludwig has been attended to."—Hartorff retired chuckling within himself, that he had sped his

bolt so successfully, for he pretty well knew how the matter would end.

“ Here, Sir Leech,” he said to the man of drugs and plasters, “ the Baron wants your advice to determine whether a man will make a better seneschal for having lost some of his brains ; make haste, prithee, most worthy compounder, for his Mightiness is in no mood to tarry, even if it be that you are about to patch up a broken head-piece.”

Having delivered his message, he departed.

The person addressed was not by nature loquacious, and returned no answer to the scoffer, whose tongue was never idle, when disagreeable news could be communicated, or an insult could be offered ; but quickly attended the Baron’s summons, who addressed him : “ So, master Leech, Ludwig has been playing the fool, and has got a hurt.”

“ He has, Sir.”

“ Is it a bad one ?”

“ It is.”

“ Will he be able to journey with us to-morrow ?”

“ He will not.”

“ How long ere he will be cured ?”

“ Can’t say, no man can ; it is an ugly hurt.”

“ Will he die ?”

“ No.”

“ Enough,” and the man of few words retired.

Hartorff was again summoned, and told to prepare for to-morrow’s march ; “ and remember,” added the Baron, “ all immediately to their quarters, and you, Hartorff, no drinking to-night.” He then waved him to retire.

Before it was light, Konrad left his home, and presented himself for admittance at the Castle gates ; he held a small valise in his hand ; a few coins in his pocket were all that his parents could spare from their wants.

His heart was sad ; he had entered on his present course of life for the reasons he had given Krantz,—to relieve his parents from his maintenance ; and with the hope that fate might favour him to better theirs, and his own condition ;—but he felt none of those buoyant aspirations which usually fill the hearts of the young when they take their first step in life to seek, by their own energies, the road to fame and fortune. He had not, he was well aware, one feeling in common with those into whose association he had entered ; in heart he felt he should live in greater solitude than he had ever known in his native village ; so grave and so sedate was his manner, when he joined the troop now assembling, that Hartorff observed, “ the Baron wanted a scribe, but he has got a pharisee into the bargain :—that in giving them such a companion, he intended their march to be a pilgrimage and penance.” He determined to impose one on Konrad, or give him

a chance of keeping Ludwig company, and therefore selected the most unruly steed in the stables for his use ; but his object was defeated, for Konrad, having adjusted the stirrups to his satisfaction, and inspected the girths, caressed the animal gently, held the rein loosely, and seated himself in the saddle with as much ease and composure, as if his charger had been accustomed to his management, and knew his master.

The troop, with trumpets sounding and banners waving, filed through the gates, and winding down the steep, crossed the small stone bridge which was thrown over the narrow stream, and were soon lost to view in the winding of the road. As they journeyed on, Hartorff turned to Schwartz, and observed loud enough for Konrad to hear : “ ’Tis carrying new coin to the Mint to take with us this saint to our holy war ; for my part, I would rather have the portage of his relics at my saddle bow in the

shape of a skeleton head and cross-bones ; however, he will work a miracle if he gives our leader a taste for sanctity ; he is as coy as a maiden just shorn after her vows ; I doubt if a popgun would not set his wits flying like the sparks out of his horse's hoofs."

"You hit him hard," replied Schwartz ; "but it is behind his back, and he cannot see his danger ; the youth rides well, you must confess, for I know not one of us who could keep that horse's temper and his own under control at the same time."

"Two bad things, I wot," rejoined the other, "not worth the wear and tear of the bridle that holds them." But we must leave the amiable Hartorff in order to retrace for awhile our way to the Castle.

Ludwig was too sorely hurt to be conscious, for some days, of the departure of the troop ; but when he began to recover from the effects of his wounds, he was as miserable

as the lion mentioned in the fable, who sued the mouse for his liberty, however, there was no use in brooding over his disappointment, and he felt grateful to his laconic doctor, when he gave him leave to quit his quarters. The careful leech imparted to him the orders left by the Baron, and that when sufficiently recovered, he looked to him to be responsible for the safety of his stronghold. Ludwig thought it probable that other duties would be required of him less to his taste, but this he did not think fit to communicate, he reserved to himself the privilege (as he was too ill, at the time his master left him, actually to receive his instructions) of shaping his conduct as he might feel inclined. As soon as he was well enough to walk with the assistance of a stick, he wandered down to the village. The day was sultry, and the wound became painful; he had loitered on beyond the outskirts of the village, when faintness compelled him to enter a

cottage by the way side ; this was the abode of old Hilda. Ludwig staggered in, and flung himself on a low stool ; he was scarcely able to ask for some water. Hilda had no taste for the company of any of the inmates of the Castle, and she concluded that he must be one of them, as his appearance did not bespeak the dusty garb of a traveller ; humanity, however, conquered her prejudice, and as she kindly gave what was required, observed :—

“Master, you seem to have had a bad hurt?”

“I have, Dame,” he replied ; “I did not wait for the dressing of my wound ; the day is hot, and my head seems on fire ; I am in great pain.”

“You had better let me loosen the bandage,” said the old woman ; “I have been used to such things, and in my day had no bad character for my skill.”

“Anything, good Dame, for I shall never be able to return if I do not get some relief.”

Hilda immediately took some warm water from the iron pot which was suspended over the few embers required for the preparation of her pottage; she carefully undid the bandage, and bathed the wound which had become partially inflamed from the exertion of walking and the heat of the day. She left him for a few seconds, and then returned with some simples which she infused and applied, infinitely to his relief. He felt grateful for the benefit received, as well as for the kind and willing manner of its performance.

“Troth, Dame,” he said, “when our leech, yonder, dies from repletion of suppressed words, thou shalt take his place.”

“You have had a sad wound, Master, but it has been well and carefully tended, or you could not have travelled thus far so soon.”

“Nor have so good an appetite,” rejoined he, and he looked around wistfully,

saying, "As you have found such salutary healing for the head, I wish you would bestow some charity upon the stomach, or verily, I believe I shall play ogre, and devour the little children I may meet on my way homewards."

Hilda made no answer.

"Well, but, good Dame, I have wherewithal to defray the charge of a crust of bread and a horn of beer."

"If I had it, Master, Hilda is not the one to deny it, or sell her welcome, but the lone old woman's fare your dogs would spurn." Thus saying, she placed a small portion of stale black bread, and a can of water on the table. Ludwig looked incredulous, but the general appearance of poverty about the humble cottage, convinced him that Hilda told true, and had offered all she had.

"Dame, I am sorry I asked you, and that my appetite mastered my discretion, but

get a better meal for the morrow," and taking from his pocket a few kreützers, he threw them on the table.

"No, no," said Hilda, "I am poor, but will not take money for a Christian's duty; put up your coin; though reduced to beggary, I am no beggar; no doubt Krantz will be down from the hill to-morrow, and he never enters Hilda's cottage empty-handed." Here was a spur to Ludwig's curiosity which he could not resist, spite of his hunger.

"Oh! they say yon miller is rich, and can well spare from his abundance."

"They who say so, say not true," replied the dame with energy; "he gives not from a full purse, but from the abundance of a generous heart."

"Oh! he seems a favourite of yours."

"And good cause have I to speak well of him and his, for they do kindly by me, and often pinch themselves, to give to their poorer neighbours."

“ But they say that the mill is his own.”

“ So it is,” she replied ; “ and well was the gift earned.”

“ How so, Dame ?”

“ Ah ! it is a long and a sad story, but it is time you were moving, or methinks you will lose a more savoury mess than mine.”

“ True, Dame ; but I shall come again ; so good day and many thanks.”

Towards the evening of the next day, Ludwig renewed his visit. “ He had looked in,” he said, “ to thank the dame ; the leech had been called away, and he should be grateful for her further friendly offices.” Hilda did willingly as she was asked. Ludwig inquired if Krantz had been there. He had, and had left her a loaf, which she was willing to share with him as well as the portion of pasty he had also brought for her.

“ No ; many thanks, Dame ; I laid in my forage before I started ; but favour me with

this long story of which you spoke yesterday."

"True," said Hilda, nothing loth to find a listener to her reminiscences. "You must know, then, that years ago, before Krantz was born, his father, then a youth, attended the Baron Rodolf von Reiterstein to the wars. He was a bold and faithful fellow, and on more than one occasion, came between his master and death. The Baron, on his return, gave him his freedom, a tract of land on yonder chart, and the mill, which was then but a poor concern; he married; the Baron built for him the cottage as you now see it. Frederic Krantz, with the savings from his own industry, improved the mill, enclosed and cultivated a bit of his land for garden, and throve as he deserved to do, but could not put by. He had one son spared to him; his master was again obliged to serve in the field, and nothing could gainsay Frederic but he would go

with him. He did so, and while fighting by his master's side, was badly wounded. The Baron had him carefully tended and brought to the Castle; all was of no avail, he never recovered, but lingered for some months, and before he died, entreated his protector to be kind to his boy, that he might not grow up in ignorance and wickedness. Young Krantz was then about six years old; the widow soon married again, and the Baron, then, took the boy entirely into his own care, and faithfully kept his promise to his follower. He was about a year junior to the young heir, Lewis, who was then but a weakly child. The two boys were companions; as they grew to be lads, the attachment between them increased; if there was a high tree to be climbed for birds' nests, or mistletoe, Krantz was soon at the top; if the pony was restive in crossing a pond, Krantz would swim over with the bridle round his arm; but would rather risk his

limbs, than try his patience over his book. This vexed the Baron, because of his word given to the dying father. When tired, the young Baron, Lewis, would sit down on a bank, and tell Krantz of many things he had learned from the priest, so that by degrees, he thought how pleasant it must be to know so much, and for this, and to be more with his young master, he tried to learn. When they were well nigh men, the Baron Rodolf took them to the wars, and it was said there were not two braver lads; but they grew tired of this fighting trade, and returned, after three years, to the old halls. The young Lewis brought home with him a beautiful wife, and Krantz soon after married her favourite attendant, Theresa; as his mother and father-in-law had died during his absence, he settled at the mill, but still, every day he was at the Castle, Lewis always making some excuse that he wanted him. So matters went on, the good Baron

Rodolf died ; a few months after, Lewis lost his first born, a son ; this was a great grief, and the Baroness often looked with envy on Krantz's thriving boy ; in another year she brought a daughter into the world, but lived only three days after its birth ; poor Lewis, never held up his head after this, for he dearly loved his beautiful and good lady ; his only comfort was to talk of his troubles to Krantz, and make him promise, if he should die, to protect his child, and you may be sure the other was ready enough to do this ; a few months, and we all wept for as good and kind a master as ever lived. He was laid in the Castle chapel, and while we were paying our last duties to our beloved lord, the nurse and child disappeared. Krantz was well nigh distraught, and swore he would travel the country round day and night, till he found her ; some say he did, but that, in consequence, she was removed, and although he was absent for

months, he could never trace her. It was a sore and sorry time at the Castle; then the present Baron put in his claim as male heir, and took possession of all,”

“And who, do you suspect, Dame, took the child away?”

“Whose interest think ye,” said Hilda, “was it to do so?”

“A sad story,” said Ludwig, “and poor Krantz no doubt was sorry.”

“Ah! marry, he was, he has never been the same joyous creature since, he is always thinking, he seldom comes to the village if he can help it, and never to the Castle, but to bring his yearly tribute. The old servants were all dismissed, the younger ones left the place, and the priest was no longer a welcome guest; he quitted the Castle, and has never since been heard of; it is supposed that he returned to his monastery; then some say he was privy to the theft of the child; but I do not believe it, for he was the instructor

of Louis and Krantz, and although a quiet and reserved man, was much beloved, always in the confidence of the Baron Rodolf and his son, and was with them both at the last awful hour ; the Castle after Louis's death, was certainly no place for one of his holy calling. This is my story, master."

"And so there is a chapel in the Castle?"

"In truth there is, where our noble Barons for generations have been buried, but they say, since the day of Louis's funeral, it has never been opened, Alack!—little praying or preaching down yonder, I reckon."

"And did you live in Rodolf's service?"

"In my youth I did,—there,—hard by in a cottage by the garden wall, after I married Schramm the gardener, and a happy home we had." Here old Hilda wiped away a tear ; Ludwig still looked inquiringly.

“No, no, no more, Master.” Her lips quivered, and she motioned Ludwig to leave her. He saw that the old woman was pained and troubled, and saying “good day, thanks Dame,” quitted her.

CHAPTER V.

THE departure of the Baron was a great relief to the inmates at the mill. During Ludwig's illness they had been free from interruption; in the still hours of night, they could enjoy without fear of observation the clear atmosphere of the hill, and repose in a more airy apartment. Still Krantz was aware how irksome such a life must be to Clotilda, for so we must name his guest, and how inefficient all their efforts, must be, even deeply interested as they were in her fate, and fortunes, to while

away the tedious hours, fraught with constant uncertainty, care and anxiety ; although she found employment in attendance on her child, and joy in its innocent caresses. Whilst he slept, work with conversation filled up the hours, for those upon whose fidelity she had thrown herself, had been educated far beyond their sphere of life ; Krantz had shared advantages known to few in those times, even among the higher ranks ; his naturally fine understanding, innate good breeding, and the respect he felt for her, secured her from assumption and intrusion : her gentle manners rendered them if possible more zealous in her service, and more desirous to chase away, by every delicate and devoted attention, the uneasy thoughts which invaded her mind, and the painful reflections of how sorely she was beset by danger.

The night was calm, the genial air hardly perceptible, save from the gentle waving of

the branches of the weeping birch. The heath was moonlit, and the gray-stone walls of the miller's house were conspicuous in the flood of soft light. Here and there the hollies and firs in the ravines cast their lengthened shadows on the sloping banks above, and gave the idea of depth and intensity to these shallow groves.

"How different," observed Clotilda, "did this heath appear on that tempestuous night when despairingly I sought this friendly shelter."

"It has ever surprised me, lady," replied Krantz, "that so unused to hardship, you were able to find your way through woods and over this wild chart; doubtless that providence, who ever watches over the helpless, guided your steps aright."

"You say truly, Krantz, if I had been inured to greater fatigue, or my venerable guide had been spared to me, I should not have reached your sheltering roof in such a

forlorn and exhausted condition : I would fain know what has become of that good monk, whom I left in the hut in the dark forest ; he gave me the route so carefully laid down for our guidance ; but for the possession of such a direction, I never could have found my way over these pathless wastes. When I reached the heath amidst the storm, my slender basket of provisions was exhausted ; how often did I sink, spent with exertion, and rise again in the renewed hope of gaining the beacon light, which, gleaming from your cottage windows, greeted my eyes. I was consoled by reflecting, that the violence of the tempest left me alone on the heath to seek my asylum unobserved amidst its terrors.”

“ Your wish, lady, has been forestalled. I sought the venerable guide of your steps, but could learn no more from the woodman than this, that after some days of suffering he left the forest in a very feeble state ; it

surprised me that he did not pursue his journey hither, to assure himself of your security, till better reasons for his not doing so presented themselves to me; doubtless he argued, so many days had elapsed, that he might be assured you had either reached us in safety, or that your failure had involved you in some danger, of which mischance it would be better to give timely notice, to those who entrusted you to his care; he was a stranger to this part of the country, and had given up to you the only clue to guide his search; enquiry would have been a finger post to your retreat; perhaps," he added, "he took the wiser resolution of returning to Augsburg."

"Your conclusions are ever just, my kind Krantz, what do I not owe to your constant vigilance and forethought?"

"Alas! fair lady, hitherto my endeavours have been but feebly seconded by my success, for believe me I hold my life at little price in your defence."

“Look ! look !” cried Thumelda in alarm, “surely some object moves in the front of yonder clump of firs.”

The miller’s attention, also, was now anxiously fixed upon a dark figure advancing into the moonlight. “In ! in !” he exclaimed, starting up and drawing Theresa to his side, in order to cover the retreat of Clotilda and Thumelda ; “now follow Theresa, and secure the entrance to the chamber, but return quickly.” The figure still came slowly onward, and was but a short distance from them when Theresa returned. A man in holy garb stood opposite to them, the cowl which covered his head, nearly concealed his face, as his sable cloak did his figure. “Peace be to your house,” he said, and letting fall his cowl, discovered the person whom Krantz most desired to see. The miller for a moment was overcome,—then moved forward, and pressed warmly the monk’s hands.

“Welcome, most welcome, Father Augustine; how grateful your presence is to us, I have not words to tell.”

“And yet, my son, I have no good tidings to communicate; but where is Clotilda? surely from yonder copse, I saw more than two figures moving in front of your cottage.”

“Truly you did, good father; the lady Clotilda is here and safe, but I fear I have been rash, even at this late hour, to venture my permission that she should leave her hiding place.”

“Not so, good friend; anxiously have I watched, from yonder dell, the deepening shades of night with the gradual disappearance of the lights in the Castle and village. When I deemed that I might approach in safety for you and her, I left my lair, and intense interest aided my sight. This is not the wayfarer’s path, but I feared my appearance by daylight might cause idle speculation in your household.”

“What news, my good Father?”

“The guide,” he replied, “to whom I entrusted Clotilda and her child, returned to me in sorry plight. No doubt she has communicated the misfortune of his sickness, and that he feared to detain her with him until his recovery, he wisely determined when he could travel, on seeking me at Augsburg, where our convocation was then sitting. The assembly is broken up for a time; Maurice, as you know, invests Magdeburg for the Emperor, but still presses for the release of his father-in-law, the Landgrave of Hesse; I doubt not he has his own game to play as well; he will claim latitude for those of your persuasion; he also fears the Emperor’s love of power, and his desire to subjugate the rights of the Electors; all is war and contention; no place is secure from its oppression and manifold evils. Alack a day! that civil discord should thus tear the heart of this unhappy country, and that Christians who declare themselves the followers of Him whose gospel preacheth

peace and mercy, and whose deeds, while He inhabited this earth for the salvation of mankind, were clothed in charity, should thus, like voracious beasts of prey, live by blood and rapine, and sacrifice thousands of those, over whom destiny hath given them command, to their mad ambition ! Fearful will be the reckoning of those who thus lead blindfolded into the pit, the herd delivered by our Great Shepherd into their keeping ! heavy the account they will have to render for the thousands sent by them to their gory beds, unrepented and unshriven, in the prime of life, and in the fullness of their sins !” and here the good man crossed himself, and offered an inward prayer for those, thus misleading and misled ; “ but I must turn,” he added from such harrowing scenes, “ tell me how fare matters at the Castle ?”

Krantz then detailed the events already recorded, and also the Baron’s departure.

“ And whom goes he to slay ?” demanded Augustine.

“Report,” replied the miller, “says he goes to aid Maurice, but I fancy his sword will flash where most gold can garnish its scabbard, and friend and foe will be laid under contribution on the march. He takes with him sixty good men at arms, with the hope of increasing his troop as he journeys onward. Hartorff his lieutenant is next to himself in command.”

“And whom has he left here as Seneschal?”

“One Ludwig, who was disabled by an accidental wound, the evening before his departure.”

“Ludwig say ye? has he been long in the Baron’s service?”

“I rather think he has from a boy.”

“Enough,” said the monk, “and now to the Lady Clotilda, I have much to say to her, and must leave you early in the morning.”

Without delay they adjourned to Clotilda’s chamber, Theresa going forward to prepare

her for the monk's approach. She rushed to his arms, and for some moments was incapable of uttering those enquiries, which her heart yearned to make. The monk gazed with fond pleasure at her and her child. Krantz retired, for he was aware she might be restrained by his presence from asking many questions which she would fain propose. We will not detail the conversation, or forestal that which must be reserved for another part of this history. We are not under this restriction as regards Augustine's communication with Krantz. "You must be prepared my friend," he said "to travel with your charge at a moment's warning; be ready therefore with such apparel as may screen you both from observation. I will give you notice on my arrival at Magdeburg, if such a step should become necessary; should it be out of my power to do so, I must leave it to your sagacity, to take such measures upon the spur of the moment, as may seem

best to you. Your slender means have been of late largely taxed, and I fear that your resources are low ; if your departure from hence should be expedient, conceal these gold pieces about your person, and make over to Clotilda also, some portion of them in case of accident." He then laid a bag of coin upon the table : it was evident that this was an undesired gift to the miller, but the monk added—"Remember this loan or gift is for Clotilda's use ; scruple not therefore to accept it, I would wish the child should be left in Theresa's charge, if so it can be managed."

"I know not how this can be," replied Krantz, "as all, for miles around, know that my children are unmarried, and that within many leagues I have no relation who would require at my hands the care of such an infant, neither am I sure that this asylum would be a safe one."

"Nor can I afford a safer," observed the monk, "in these times of religious feud."

The miller mused, "There is one in our village most fit for such a trust."

"And who is he?"

"Our good pastor; he can be relied upon; he is so ill off, that I am sure he would willingly undertake the charge, but as he is a man so conscientious with respect to truth, that neither threats nor torture would draw equivocation from him, and also too simple to guard against deception, it were better to tell him no more than is absolutely requisite, and in telling that little, to bind him to secrecy; he will never betray that which may be intrusted to him; but how to manage this, or induce the mother to part with her child, I cannot counsel."

"Leave that to me," replied the monk, "the latter will be the more difficult task, but Clotilda's love for her boy must be my weapon of attack upon her feelings. I must forego my intention of departure for a few hours, and devote the morrow

to this purpose. Now, good Krantz, I will repose awhile; two hours will suffice for this refreshment. I shall leave Theresa and yourself to pave the way for the separation I must propose, and which it sorely grieves me to enforce."—By the first tint of dawn his pallet was empty,—the miller had replenished his scrip.

CHAPTER VI.

LUDWIG, whose idle hours were many, and whose curiosity was of a weedy growth, like vegetation on uncultivated land, felt a strong desire, after the story recounted to him by Hilda, to visit the Castle chapel: he was by no means exempt from the superstition of the age, to which even his superiors in birth and education, in those times were wont to yield; he would fain have procured an associate to accompany him in this inspection of the sanctuary for the

dead ; but the consciousness that a feeling of awe, not totally unallied to fear, imposed upon him this desire for companionship, probably disinclined him for some time to make an application to any of his comrades to bear him company ; or after he had done so, to one of them unsuccessfully, to hazard a second refusal ; for the one to whom he did make this proposal answered ; “Not I, master Seneschal, for who knows but those grim old knights, who they say lie there, may take huff at our visit without an invitation, and stalk out of their tombs ; or some of the buried monks may rise from their stone coffins, to reproach us for our misdeeds, and perhaps carry us off at once into purgatory, without giving us time for an Ave Maria. No, no, my good friend, face the hobgoblins by yourself, and if, as I fancy you lack a screw to your courage, stay away. I warrant me the noble company there will go on sleeping

as comfortably as they have done for long years past, without your whistling a fearful dirge over them ; I have no taste for mouldy walls and cross-legged knights ; I would ten to one rather look at a tailor perched upon his board, than on one of those marble gentlemen ready booted and spurred, as if prepared for a start."

Ludwig regretted that his request had been proffered to so unwilling a comrade, for he was a brave fellow, and could not brook to hear his name thus coupled with fear, nor were the suggestions offered by the other, calculated to encourage him to the exploration of this long neglected receptacle for mortality ; if he did not now go, he knew the laugh would be against him, and if he did, he felt that the gratification of his curiosity would be dearly bought by the terror he might experience ; and yet he reflected, " How foolish to mind this prating fellow, who carries more wine than wits in

his head : what is there to fear from stone effigies ? The bones lying beneath must have been dust long since ; but then again spirits do not require bones or sinews to set them walking : but what have they to do with me ? I am not their next of kin, the Baron might ; feel some qualms ; this perhaps may be the reason which causes the respectful distance at which he keeps from the holy place. But they may not choose perchance such a sinner as myself to invade their precincts. ‘Never mind,’ quoth courage, ‘the chapel door may be left open, and I can retire if I find the company inclined to be communicative, disposed to take a turn with me, or meet me half way ; and then again I shall have the laugh against that stupid fellow.’

It was a relief to him, however, when he further bethought him that in all probability the door of the chapel would be locked, and that this fact at least would excuse him to his companions, without impeach-

ment of his courage for returning without having fulfilled his design; he therefore proceeded with a stout heart round the ramparts, to that part where the chapel was situated, and pushed at the door, which partially resisted his attempt. He paused for a few seconds; but he was determined to record more than one or two efforts to gain admittance, besides the difficulty also prompted him to another trial. He essayed again the iron bound door, which yielded more readily than he had looked for, so that he nearly measured his length over the sill. When he recovered his balance, he was surprised; for he did not anticipate so easy an entrance, nor expect to find from its external appearance an edifice of such extent. It was of some depth, and admitted in breadth, side aisles. The clustered columns were light and airy, and supported in just proportion the gothic arches. Up the middle aisle, between the columns, re-

posed the ancestors of the Reiterstein family, and monuments erected to the memory of its crusading heroes, whose bones were left to whiten on the sands of Syria. Their tattered banners hung listlessly over those neglected sepulchres of mortality, surmounting the tenantless helm, cuirass, and emblazoned shield. Ludwig proceeded to the chancel, where two monuments of more recent structure, and whiter hue, attracted his notice. The one to the last Rodolph represented that warrior sketched at length in his coat of mail ; on one side knelt a female with her face upturned in an attitude of prayer, her arms crossed over her bosom ; on the other a youthful belted knight, his unmailed right hand was grasped within that of the recumbent figure, while that of the left arm was supported on his bent knee, the open palm partly concealed the upper portion of his face ; the fingers were passed through his disordered hair, the whole figure was

expressive of deep sorrow. Opposite to this, was another tomb, evidently by the same artist; the young knight in a loose neglected dress, was depicted in all the agony of grief, leaning with straining eyes over a female figure, as if to assure himself of the dreadful reality, that she whom he loved best, lay there in the still attitude of death. A young child was lying upon, and encircled by her arm; a flower with a broken stem was held in the delicately chiselled fingers of her other hand. These monuments were evidently of Italian workmanship, the groups were exquisitely wrought in the purest marble; and even the unlettered youth who now gazed on the mournful sculptures, was absorbed in the contemplation of their beauty; they represented the sorrows of life, their loveliness was not impaired by the stern lines of its vices, or any of the horrors attending its extinction. What surprised him most was, that a chaplet

of fresh wild mountain flowers adorned this tomb, magnificent in its simplicity : above it none of the evidences of mortal passion, and of mortal strife waved their dusty plumes and decaying remnants; the tinted light from the glass windows above, played with flickering caprice over the pale effigies below, imparting at times the hues of bloom and existence like the mixed and varied changes of life, then left these cold representations of the dead in the same calm repose as their enshrouded tenants; the tendrils of the ivy waved to and fro across the side casements, throwing their fantastic shadows over the pavement.

A dead silence, save from the breeze playing among these unbidden parasites, and the long grass, which found a bed among some of the decaying buttresses, pervaded the building. The untutored soldier felt subdued by the tranquil holiness of the place. He was suddenly aroused by

the shutting of the chapel door, which resounded in long echoes through the building. He turned sharply round; there was no wind to have caused the door to slam with such violence; he thought that some of his companions perhaps had closed it in joke, in order to scare him from his scrutiny; he was proceeding down one of the side aisles, when a dark object advanced from behind one of the columns, and arresting his arm as he was in the act of flight, whispered his name. Terror now took possession of the hardy soldier, and his face was as colourless as those of the statues upon which he had been gazing.

“Fear not! good youth,” said the figure, “it is a living man who addresses you; the inmates of these chapel walls will never again re-visit this earth; their mortal remains have long since been decayed; their spirits are, I trust, in those realms of immortality where corruption of body or soul

may never enter. I would speak with you where none will venture to interrupt us."

Ludwig bowed assent, for he had not yet sufficiently recovered from his panic to find words for reply.

"Enough !" said the monk, "follow me."

The young soldier did as he was ordered; the monk proceeded slowly up to the altar, and turning, said solemnly, "now swear that you will never reveal this interview, nor anything which I may communicate to you on this spot!"

"I do swear," said Ludwig, in a voice still tremulous.

"'Tis well : remember you that some years since a priest rescued you from the battle field, where you had been left for dead, attended you in your sickness, and healed your wounds?"

"Indeed I do, holy Father, and to that good man I owe my life, and the knowledge of the only virtuous precepts I ever heard."

“And does gratitude still warm your heart to that priest; would you serve him if you could, follow his counsel, and obey his bidding?”

“Indeed I would, and glad should I be to render him some service for all that he then did for me. Many a dreary day and night did he watch by my miserable pallet, finally restored me to health, and when I no longer needed his assistance, and could go forth in strength, supplied my wants with more than sufficient means to bear me on my journey, until I could join my commander. For his sake I have kept one of those coins, and here it is;” at the same time he displayed a gold ring and piece of money which were suspended by a small cord beneath his doublet. “We soldiers, Father, are somewhat superstitious, and I had a fancy that this coin, received from so holy a man, would bring me good luck.”

Hitherto Ludwig had not seen the face

of his mysterious companion, but the monk now threw back the hood of a large dark cloak in which he was enveloped; and in him Ludwig recognised the only person who had ever been to him a real friend and preserver. He fell on his knees before him, and said, "Holy Father your blessing, I have ill deserved it, but do not deny it me, I pray."

"Nor will I, my son," he replied, and laying his hands upon his head, he repeated a short but fervent prayer, then added, "now remember, Ludwig, you are upon your oath; I shall confide to you a charge which you must watch over, and shield from harm; meet me before day-break, under the clump of trees on the other side of the stone bridge. I shall deliver into your care a young child, also a sum of money; take both to the pastor's house; simply tell him that a stranger delivered them into your hands, to be conveyed to

him;—that he must rear the child with care; ask no questions; answer none; and say that a yearly stipend, exceeding his own poor income, will repay his trouble. A cross will be found marked on the child's arm."

"And why not, holy father, do this errand yourself? I fear the pastor will not willingly receive a ward at my hands."

"Ask not my reasons why I would that my presence in this neighbourhood should not be known. You can truly state that you know nought of the child, and that its welfare concerns those whom he most values."

"But, good father, as you have proved yourself no ghost, how came you here unobserved, for you must have passed the Castle gates?"

"Again I say, ask no questions; I shall quit this place as I came, unseen by any but yourself," He now descended the altar

steps, preceded Ludwig to the door of the chapel, and bidding him adieu, closed it after him, remaining himself behind.

Ludwig paced the ramparts for a time, in order to collect his bewildered thoughts, and to reflect upon what he had seen and heard, but to him it was all a mystery. How the monk could have obtained admission into the chapel, and his object in placing such confidence in him? however, as the more he pondered over these things, the more he was puzzled, he bent his steps leisurely to the hall, where he found his comrades in full occupation over a goodly pasty and tankard.

“How now!” cried Johann, “what news, worthy seneschal, do you bring from your pilgrimage? the dumb gentry I reckon have let you have all the talk to yourself. Their spirits do not seem to have brightened yours, for you look scared as a cat in the water. Has your appetite gone to look after your wits?”

Ludwig might truly have answered that it had.

“Come, come, my good friend, a horn of beer, you, Johann, if I judge rightly from its appearance have kept your wit for a cut at that venison pasty, and now my adventures shall profit you in a piece of advice; never play the fool as I have done, and pry into that chapel.”

They now clamoured to know what he had seen, and what he had heard, but Ludwig with a solemn tone and air repeated his injunction, remarking, that it was not permitted to tell dead men’s tales, and that if he could do so, they would repent their ill-timed curiosity, and that the Castle would no longer be an agreeable residence for them; then rising from the board, he said, “it is time to relieve Brandt at the gates; the standing sentinel over them is, I must confess, a dull duty although not a heavy one.”

Leaving his companions to all the con-

jectures and terror to which his peculiar manner had given rise, and which would effectually prevent their making any attempt to visit the sacred precincts, he sought Brandt, and addressing him, said, "It is time that you were relieved, or those fellows will lighten the labour of digestion for you. Is the leech returned? has any one been from the village?"

"No one," answered Brandt, "I believe we are the only living beings hereabouts; they must have all died suddenly down yonder."

"Strange," thought Ludwig, "how could he get into the chapel? perhaps." he continued aloud, "the sultry weather has made you sleepy Brandt, and you saw not, because your eyes were shut."

"Think you they could come through the key-hole, or like witches fly over the battlements on broom-sticks?"

Punctually, according to the priest's de-

sire, Ludwig, ere it was light, awaited him at the spot appointed.

Krantz had so clearly shewn to Clotilda how deeply her child's preservation and her own were involved in a temporary separation, that, amidst tears and fond caresses, she at last consented to place him in the priest's arms, at the same time carefully covering him from the night air ; and before he was delivered to Ludwig, he was in a sound sleep.

"I must away, Ludwig," said the monk, "you await here for a time. The pastor I know rises with the sun ; an hour, and morning light will relieve you from your sleeping burthen, but remember your oath, and as you hope for Heaven's mercy, do not break it. Here is gold to ratify our compact ; you may need it, I know well that you have been a careless trustee of your own fortune."

"Father, I will not receive your gold ; you

have my oath and my gratitude, I will barter neither. Many a reckless deed I have done for that dross, but this shall not be added to the catalogue. If you still fear to trust me, take back the boy, and seek another, in whom you can better confide, to deliver him safely."

The priest replied mildly, "I do not doubt you, young man, nor offer you this purse as a bribe to the secrecy which you have already sworn. Keep it to use in my service; if such I should not require, I will again exact it from you. Here is the bag likewise containing the good pastor's hire, farewell;" and his receding figure was soon lost among the dark trees.

Ludwig carefully stowed the purse and bag of money in his doublet, and folding the child in his cloak, sat for a while watching, with impatience, the dawn.

He then slowly pursued his way to the village, happily found the pastor already

risen, and enjoying in the porch of his small dwelling the freshness of the early morning.

Ludwig briefly told his tale, and laying the boy upon the good man's knees, and placing the bag of coin by his side, departed as quickly as he could, without waiting for reply or objection. He had drawn his slouched hat over his eyes so as to shade, his features, as much as possible, and the astonished pastor could not certainly have identified the donor of such deposits. The commission had been little to Ludwig's taste, and most heartily rejoiced was he when the business was concluded, for however deeply he might feel grateful to the priest, he had no desire for his presence, if it brought with it such onerous duty. His gratitude towards the good man was sincere, but it was evident to him, that his employer did not feel perfectly assured of his trustworthiness.

He had made him merely the blind agent in whatever plans he might be purposing to execute, and however disguised by words was the object of the gift, he could only look upon the purse of money as a bribe, and felt somewhat irritated at the suspicion implied. But had his career hitherto deserved a more favourable opinion? He could not say it had. Both his commander and his lieutenant Hartorff bore arms for any who would hold out the fairest hopes of pay or plunder, nor did they confine themselves to open war, they levied their exactions on their own account, either in peace or war; town and village were alike subjected to their predatory excursions: the traveller did not always, if known to be well supplied with gold or jewels, escape their rapacity: and his comrades, were they not all of the same stamp, pursuing the same lawless courses? When he summed up these cogitations he came to the conclusion

that in the priest's situation, he should not have confided in him (Ludwig) at all, and that either the holy father was not a prudent man, or that he was in a strait for some more trust worthy person to aid him, or perhaps he had discovered some latent seeds of virtue in him. This last idea was more soothing to him, for although he began his reflections in his own favour, he ended them by his own condemnation.

On his return, he proceeded to the chapel, but the door was fast, and no exertion on his part, had the slightest effect to move it. It was clear then that the priest must have preceded him there, but we will leave him to his duties, and follow for a while the march of the Baron and his troop.

CHAPTER VII.

THE Baron rode on for some miles in silence, and Konrad felt as little desire to interrupt his moody meditations as to join in with, or to be the subject of Hartorff's, sneering and coarse jests. This worthy, however, was not easily repulsed when he thought he had the power of annoyance.

“Verily, Master scribe,” said he addressing Konrad, “I fear your smooth face may bring our characters into disrepute. Our

Baron, before our march, should have provided you with cuirass and cap of steel, or a shaven crown and cowl, if he thought to pass you as one of our sex; we shall be suspected of having levied a tithe in kind on some nunnery in our way, and be cited before the Holy Fathers."

"I have an arm, friend," retorted Konrad, "which will make the rough speech of those who say so smoother than my face, and teach them that I can be an able squire at denting a cuirass, or an expert valet at dusting a doublet."

"By my troth, sir scribe," quoth Hartorff, "you talk largely, but I doubt me if the shell you could crack must not be minus the kernel."

"No doubt, Master Hartorff, there is many a walnut tree which pays not the pains of thrashing; methinks now, you look as if you were well protected by your harness; but if you crack not your enemy's

head-piece with more skill than your jokes, I would, if I were you, give over both trades."

"Ah ! Master scribe, when you mount a shield, I suppose your motto will be, run and read."

"And yours, friend," replied Konrad, "run without the reading."

At this time the party were entering a wood ; the boughs hung low, and the narrow path allowed but one at a time to pass. The Baron bent down to his saddle-bow, and passed under the thick drooping branches, but Konrad who was in his rear, flourished a stout ashen stick, the only weapon of any kind which he possessed, and skilfully turning his horse round, raised himself slightly in his stirrups, and nearly severed it asunder with his staff. It fell across the neck of the steed which Hartorff bestrode, who reared, and stumbling over a root that was in the path, lodged the Lieutenant, who was in truth a good

and bold rider, upon the ground. He was up again in a moment, and rode after Konrad in order to strike him down with his pike. The other backed his horse into the overhanging brushwood, and the lieutenant would have come upon the haunches of the Baron's steed if he had not suddenly reined in.

"What is that?" cried Reiterstein sternly, rearing his charger round.

"Merely, Baron," said the youth coolly, "a courtesy on my part to save your lieutenant the degradation of stooping. I made a clearance of the boughs which you passed under anon, and Master Hartorff's steed, mistaking his rider's hour for repose, gave him a premature lodging in a bed of nettles."

"It was a malicious trick of that beardless youth to cast ridicule on your lieutenant; I was willing to teach him that better manners were due to your officer."

“And is it usual to enforce discipline upon an unarmed man with a heavy pike? no more of these broils,” said the Baron.

“Really,” observed Konrad innocently, “I deserve better from your officer, Baron; perhaps he will now be convinced that a smooth face and a nerveless arm are not synonymous.”

It was now past mid-day; the path became wider and the party quickened their pace, hoping to clear the forest ere sun down, but night in these sombre woods was forestalled by an hour, and after much difficulty, and some time spent in their intricacies and windings, in passing over fallen trees, projecting roots, and broken stumps, it was determined to bivouac for the night in the first open space which might present itself. A turn in the narrow way at length brought them to the spot they desired, with the advantage of a small spring, which after gurgling through stones and moss, fell into

a hollow in the broken ground, and formed a small pool. It was evident that, although they had been winding their way for some time in the dark, day-light had not quite departed. There was yet sufficient to direct their operations. Every trooper was now busily engaged in unburthening his steed, and leading the tired animal who had not been unbitted since the morning, to the spring, then leaving him to find such forage as the more open glades rendered palatable, betook himself to the cares of his own comforts.

Each man had stowed in a bag at his saddle-bow, provision for the twenty-four hours; the Baron alone having led horses to carry such baggage as he might require for his own convenience.

The men cast aside their heavier accoutrements; cuirass and saddle formed their hard pillows. Konrad carefully groomed his steed; he fashioned a piece of sapling into

a semicircle in order to relieve his beast from the sweat and dust of the journey, using afterwards a handful of dry cones as substitutes for a more convenient instrument with which to finish his operations, and having thoroughly examined and washed at the spring the feet of the noble creature which had carried him so well, was caressing and leading him back to his companions in toil, when the Baron who had been watching him, observed—

“No badgrooming for a novice, Hartorff; methinks in time he may make as good a trooper as the best of us; he seems as alert as if he had not travelled a league.”

“He has not much to carry,” replied the other, “and is the best mounted of our party.”

“True, but he cannot be used to such hard riding: how happened it by the bye, that the highest couraged steed in the stable was apportioned to the lightest weight?

he would have suited you better lieutenant."

"I have no great fancy for the beast," he replied; "our tempers do not suit; I cannot abide puling over an animal for an hour, to coax him into humour, but nevertheless I care not to change steeds, if it be your pleasure, and certainly the beast is a fitter one for a man at arms, than a scribe, with a spelling book in his pocket, and an ink-horn at his belt."

Konrad was determined not to part so easily with his horse, for Hartorff's motives were palpable; he was jealous of the credit he had gained in managing a steed believed to be untameable, and was willing to possess the finest horse in the troop.

"Hold, Master Hartorff, unless it be the Baron's pleasure, I shall not so readily part with black John; you ordered the steed to be delivered to me, I have no doubt with the friendly intention of giving me a taste for,

and a lesson in, horsemanship. Our tempers suit admirably ; my spelling book and ink-horn seem more consonant to his mettle, than the clatter of your steel clothing. I came opportunely to relieve you from an animal who would have been left useless in the stable."

Having thus replied, he led his horse among the trees, where he gathered such leaves as he could collect for a litter. Wrapping himself in his cloak with his saddle and valise for a pillow, he was soon in the land of dreams, in which Thumelda, the Baron, Hartorff, and Krantz, were mixed up in rapid succession and confusion. Fatigue rendered his sleep for a time heavy, but not comfortable, for though unused to luxury, he did not find much relief for his tired members on the hard ground. From time to time he arose to stretch his limbs ; his rude companions were lying around, sheltered by the lofty firs, whose tall trunks,

the growth of ages,—reared their tufted heads like stately columns on every side. The moon in her pale beauty shone over the open space, glancing her beams on the steel head - pieces and pikes which were piled in the centre, and reflecting them at intervals on the side arms of the sleeping troopers.

Konrad again courted repose, but was awake before dawn, and having refreshed himself at the spring, sauntered under the trees. His attention was arrested by a voice not far distant.

“I tell you, Baron, he will bring us no good; he will be but a spy upon our actions, and is too full of heretical doctrines and crude notions of honour, to serve our purpose. He forswears the idea of absolution, and prefers carrying his sins about with him, until he is loaded like a pack-horse, rather than relieve his pocket and his conscience to the first priest, who

may be willing to lighten the one and release him from the burthen of the other. Then, as I heard from Schwartz coming along, he is the sworn ally of Krantz the miller, and they say is not insensible to the beauty of the daughter."

"Ha!" exclaimed the Baron, "the better reason he should be one of us. If he come as a spy, we must not lose sight of him; his conscience is no affair of ours, if he pile it with sin as high as the mountain of Brammelberg."

"Pardon me, Baron; a man who doth not shrive, is chary as to the load he undertakes to carry about with him in this world, and through the gates of death into the next; they say the miller has forbidden his suit to the maiden, and that he has left his father's house in despair."

Here distance separated the speakers from the listener. In half an hour the troop was in movement, and before mid-day, had

reached a small gast-haus on the outskirts of the forest, where it was determined to make a halt until the afternoon.

Mine hostess was ill-prepared for such a troop of hungry adventurers, who, she was aware, were in the habit of living at free quarters; but to say nay, while there was kine in the field, or wine in the cellar, she knew to be vain, therefore met the necessity with good grace, and supplied them as far as her means permitted with apparent cheerfulness. Ere they were quite ready to take the road, the tramp of a horse at full trot was heard approaching, and a trooper drew rein before the door. He was well mounted, but divested of any armour of defence.

A stout doublet of dark brown cloth was girded round his waist by a broad belt of buff leather, in which were inserted two

pistols and a dagger. A broad-sword hung from his side, by a cross belt of the same material. His legs were defended by thick high boots ; he wore a cloak of the colour of his doublet ; and a slouched hat, which from its peculiar shape seemed designed to shield him equally from sun or rain, completed his attire. He was of robust make, and his bronzed complexion denoted continual exposure to the weather. His hair was bushy, and added an air of ferocity to his features, which bore the stamp of audacity and courage, but of honesty also.

The Baron, ere his approach, had been leaning with his arms crossed in meditation, but suddenly rising from his listless posture, started up, and advanced towards him.

“ This is greater speed than I looked for ; I hardly expected you so soon. Here Schwartz,

see to Hendrick's beast, and order that something be got for his master. Now Hendrick, what news?"

"Why this, Baron: the Elector is impatient that you should join him, therefore have I ridden hard, lest I should miss you where there are many paths."

"How fares the siege, soldier?"

"They are likely," replied Hendrick, "to give us a long sitting before their walls; and some days since, in an adventurous sally, Duke George of Mecklenburg with Sir Otho and some other nobles, were made prisoners, and are now profitting by the hospitality of the wool gatherers, and fat burghers of Magdeburg. The Elector, who narrowly escaped the same fate himself, owing to this misfortune, the more needs your presence, which he looked for ere this."

"By my faith," exclaimed the Baron angrily, "I have half a mind to decline his

overtures ; doth he not know that my force hath been much thinned in Italy, and that I have now left Reiterstein nearly defenceless, in order to bring such small numbers to his aid as are left me ?”

“Doubtless,” responded Hendrick, “the Duke is impatient, in order that you may share the honours of the siege, as well as some of the goodly stores its wealthy citizens have hoarded within their stone walls. He agrees to your terms, and proposes, that until Sir Otho may be released, his band shall be placed under your command.”

“Enough,” said the Baron ; “now Har-torff, to horse. Hendrick will doubtless be ready by the time we are prepared to continue our march.”

We shall leave this party for a time, and carry our readers to another scene ; we must retrograde some days in order to explain the last part of the foregoing Chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE Town of Magdeburg had been invested since September in the preceding year by Maurice's army, to which had been joined the forces of Duke George of Mecklenburg, both acknowledged Lutherans, and both in arms for the Catholic Emperor, in order to force the unhappy inhabitants to subscribe to, and receive doctrines in opposition to those of which they had declared themselves believers. But Maurice had ulterior objects in view, and although the Baron's

numbers were few, his standard was certain to attract adventurers for other reasons, in addition to the reputation which he bore, as a brave and skilful soldier.

The captivity, besides, of the young Duke George, who commanded the cavalry, had deprived him of an ambitious and distinguished leader; and Maurice was well assured, that Reiterstein would be too eager in his desire to share in the expected plunder, resent any signs of displeasure which he might display, at his delay.

At the time this story commences, in a chamber of the keep in the Castle of Magdeburg, two prisoners were, and had been for some hours confined; a small lamp suspended from the ceiling feebly gleamed on the gray-stone walls, which were pierced by two loop holes only, scarcely admitting, even at noon-day, the light of heaven. A rough table and two low stools were all the furniture the cell contained; one of its occupants, spite of his

recent wounds, was impatiently pacing the limited space; his cheek was flushed by anger and shame as well as by pain from the sabre cut which he had received in a skirmish of the morning; his hand intuitively essayed to clutch the sword from his side, which was no longer there, as if to cleave a passage through the massy walls; but when he recollected that he was weaponless he clenched his teeth, and stamped impetuously. The whole expression of his face and figure betokened high courage, daring ambition, and impatience under restraint, contradiction, or suffering. It is easy to imagine how hard imprisonment must have been to such a character, possessing all the fire of youth, added to a temperament as ardent as reckless. His companion in misfortune sat in silent abstraction, not less dauntless in his bearing; but sorrow and disappointment marked every lineament of his noble countenance, and his soiled and

disordered appearance gave evidence that he had not been subdued without a fierce struggle; but there he sat, the sport of fortune, and the victim of war; many conflicting thoughts gave a varying expression to his face; there tenderer recollections were blended with, but softened the sterner passions. Much of his youth had been spent in Italy; its ancient freedom, grandeur, and renown accorded with his high sentiments of knightly valour; while its more polished arts and manners had thrown an elegance into his demeanour which manifested itself in every movement. His figure was exquisitely proportioned, and though firmly knit, was rather slender than robust; but for the alternate flashing of his dark eye, you would have said that he was calm, so perfectly tranquil was his attitude, and so free from any gesture of impatience.

“Truly Otho,” said his companion with some asperity, “you bear your misfortunes

meekly; one would think that you were an old acquaintance with such accommodation as the good citizens have provided for us, instead of a free denizen of the earth accustomed to liberty and command."

"It is the fortune of war," replied Otho tranquilly, "and resistance under it will not lighten, or abate the inconvenience."

"Inconvenience," retorted the impetuous Duke, surveying the dismal and narrow apartment; "by my spurs, inconvenient enough, for a wounded man; you seem to have foreseen some such mischance, by your supine manner of treating it."

"Nor in following your highness in daring exploits, need I be a dealer in forbidden arts, to foretel the possibility of such discomfiture as hath now befallen us; but a soldier should be prepared for such tricks of fortune, or if he cannot escape them, bear with them. If our good swords, (and well their temper aided us) could have saved us from this mishap, we should now be reposing in our tents."

“Surely,” said the Duke, “Maurice will take some more active measures for attack, and release us from this durance.”

——“Not he,” replied Otho, “it is neither his policy, nor his principle; he will cause no more slaughter among the good Magdeburghers than he can avoid; and there he is right. I wish not release at such an expenditure of blood. I fear we must content ourselves to remain prisoners, until he starves the besieged into conditions, or surrender; and more, I doubt if your adventurous courage does not shoot beyond the aim of his policy.”

“And who will command my cavalry, think you, Otho, or your well ordered band, as valiant although not so numerous?”

“Albert of Brandenburg,” he replied, “will supply your place and the dark Reiterstein mine. A messenger ere long, (if he cannot negotiate our release, which it is not likely he will be able, if willing to do,) will be sent to hasten and

make terms with that worthy—if he be returned from Italy, and hath not pledged himself to some higher bidder, for larger hire; or has not already departed upon some predatory excursion, on his own account.” And here Otho’s calm resignation seemed to desert him, and his flashing eye, and burning cheek, denoted how intensely hateful to him the person was, of whom he spoke.

“Truly a worthy deputy for you,” rejoined George, “a man ever ready to shed blood in any cause for gold, or to pay gold for blood, if likely to bring usurious interest on the outlay. But, I wonder me whether these pugnacious citizens mean to reciprocate by anticipation the Elector’s kindness, and starve us out; or do they think that our palates are satisfied by the morning’s taste of cold steel? and that abstinence will secure me from an access of feverish symptoms?”

“If they would starve us out of their city,” said Otho, “we might give them

thanks for their spare rations; no, no, depend upon it they will nourish us, to keep up our courage, that we may lash and fret under our confinement in this stone cage; neither will they make better terms with the Elector by imbittering our imprisonment; they are only willing to shew us what they can do, if patients are refractory, and cause this first taste of captivity to be irksome, in order to render our after treatment more palatable; besides, the *mélée* of the morning, no doubt, has cast the authorities into some confusion; nor can we tell how long the fight lasted after our removal from the scene of action, whether renewed, or even if now ended; nor do Count Mansfeldt, or Heideck lack courtesy."

Further conversation was precluded, for the bolts of their prison door were withdrawn, and an officer of rank, attended by a surgeon and four musqueteers, presented himself; uncovering his head, he ad-

vanced with respect towards the young Duke, who eyed him with some haughtiness, and trying to conceal his chagrin, observed :

“ In faith, Count Heideck, we were meditating the question whether Count Albert had forgotten that fortune had made Duke George of Mecklenburg his prisoner ?”

“ The Count,” replied Heideck, “ is far too brave and courteous a knight himself, to bear lightly in his recollection that he holds Duke George of Mecklenburg as his guest ; he begs, through me, his excuse for the brief discomfort which you may have suffered ; but your Highness has heralded your coming by deeds, which have given him busy occupation ; and an hour has scarcely passed since the reports brought in informed him of your detention ; he regrets to find that you have suffered in the *mélée*, and would not leave the selection of an able practitioner, and more fitting lodging to

other hands than mine. I will therefore conduct you to apartments better suited to your present condition, your rank, and the esteem in which he holds your valour, nothing doubting that you will not hesitate to pledge your princely word in order to guarantee him from responsibility. A messenger accompanies me, who, if it be your desire, shall speed with a flag of truce to the camp, with assurance of your safety ; and will likewise be the bearer of an order for such personal attendants and baggage, as you may require. I am charged with the same commission to you, Sir Otho."

He then beckoned to one of the soldiers, to supply materials ; a note was quickly despatched, the Duke's wounds were dressed, and Heideck preceded his prisoners to the apartments destined for their use during their captivity. Two attendants entered with some slight refreshment, and Count Heideck retired, saying, "he would return

to conduct them to supper, as the Governor had commanded him to do."

The two friends were speedily in possession of such changes as they had sent for; and were prepared to attend Count Heideck when he returned. The Duke had some opportunity, even in his transit from his apartment to the hall, of observing the quiet order which was maintained throughout the Castle.

Count Mansfeldt advanced to meet his captives; different groups composed of the chief officers of the garrison, prisoners of rank and the heads of the state, were waiting their arrival. No evidence of the strife without was visible in the scene before them, for many were in the garb of peace, more befitting the presence of those graceful ladies who were equally mingled with their defenders in the circle.

Count Albert led the Duke and Otho to the upper end of the hall, and presenting

them to two ladies, addressed the elder, saying :

“Isabella, fortune has favoured us with the presence of these noble gentlemen ; I am sure it were needless for me to crave your consideration, in order to make the hours which they may pass with us, as little tedious as the limited resources of our beleagured town will allow.”

The Countess bowed a graceful assent, and even Duke George could not but admit how widely different the scene before him, was from the rude manners of the camp to which he had been accustomed. The Countess was still in the prime of life ; her figure was commanding, and peculiarly elegant ; her features fine, just within the verge of being prominent ; there was a character of determination about the mouth, and a brilliancy in the eye, which bespoke promptitude, and decision in emergency, unguided by impulse ; she possessed nobility and recti-

tude of manner, which, although urbane, did not condescend to wear the masquerading cloak of affability as the disguise of latent pride. She seemed formed for the stirring scenes of uncertain warfare, among which she moved, fitted to counsel, or even in extremity, to command.

The beautiful maiden, who stood by her side, was a softened and youthful portrait of her mother; a gayer expression gave more piquancy, if less energy, to the character of her face, which was rounder; a slight sarcastic turn was at times just perceptible in the play of the lip, but so tempered by the softness of her eyes, that ridiculous pretension alone called it forth. The Count's request seemed scarcely needful to bespeak sympathy towards the strangers; there was no allusion to the events of the day, which had thrown them into their society; and during the repast, Otho found, that his loved land of Italy was the favorite

theme of the lovely maiden who was placed by his side.

Count Albert, his wife, and daughter, seemed to stand aloof from the rude manners of the age. Early in life he was disposed to become a convert to the Lutheran doctrine, but before he adopted tenets at variance with those of his forefathers, he examined with diligence into the differences and merits of both ; when he travelled into Italy, the glaring vices, bigotry, and cupidity of the Court of Rome under Paul the Third, contrasted with the simplicity, and moral purity of the religion then under his examination, and which he was inclined to profess, settled his opinions upon the firmest basis—that of reason ; he did not more lament the persecution against the Protestant church, than the fanaticism of many of its own professors, which but too often gave excuse for that persecution ; and with sorrow he now saw the avowed friends of

reformation armed against their brethren, to force upon them tenets contrary to their own persuasion.

Mansfeldt had no son to succeed him in his fiefs, if he ever recovered them; accident had deprived him of his first-born, a boy; his daughter would inherit his allodial possessions, which he hoped in better times might be restored to him; no care had been wanting on the part of her parents to fit her for the inheritance she might possess.

The banquet was abundant, but not sumptuous; for Mansfeldt foresaw the possibility of the straits to which the city might be reduced, and not only judiciously regulated the consumption of provisions generally, but gave an example in his own household, of the economy he enforced elsewhere.

“Heideck,” said the Count, “how is it that our nephew Henry is not among our guests? we can ill spare at any time the prop of our house.”

"I am never willing to be the bearer of ill news," returned Heideck, "but I grieve to say, that not long since, Count Henry was brought in from the sally of this morning, sorely, although not dangerously wounded." Heideck, as he qualified the first part of his speech, by the last sentence, looked towards Mathilda, whose blanched cheek told of a more than common interest in her cousin's fate.

The Count was starting from his seat, but Heideck added, "be not alarmed; your kinsman's hurt, as the leech assures me, will cause the brave youth some suffering; but with prompt and proper treatment, he has no apprehension for his life."

"Where is he hurt?" said the Count."

"A sword cut on the shoulder, Count."

"Would that I could measure swords with him who dealt the wound," said Albert; "his life should pay forfeit for the deed."

"It is in your power," said Otho, firmly;

“ unhappily your kinsman encountered me as he pressed eagerly into the fray ; I grieve that the fortune of war should have cast it to my lot, to cause you so much concern ; but your nephew’s valour left me no alternative, and had he not been Count Albert’s kinsman, his life would have paid the penalty for his bravery.”

This speech was uttered with so much concern and calmness of manner, that Mansfeldt’s better feeling of justice prevailed. He paused, and Schmidt observed :

“ I think, Sir Knight, an you had been wise, you would not have proclaimed a deed not likely to lighten your treatment during your captivity.”

“ I should do the Count injustice,” replied Otho, “ if such a motive withheld me ; he cannot condemn in his prisoner, the fair fight, which doubtless he applauds in his nephew, although that nephew suffered in the onslaught ; nor shall I shield myself in

silence to cheat him into greater courtesy, than his duty as a commander, and regard for his kinsman may incline him ;” and in saying this, Otho’s dark eye flashed with that energy of honest truth which his words conveyed.

Mansfeldt turning to him, said, “you have judged justly, Sir Otho, as one brave man should believe of another, although the other be his enemy in the field.”—It was evident, however worthy of himself the Count’s conduct might be, that the state of his nephew had greatly disturbed him ; and he arose as soon as the repast was concluded, to seek the youth’s apartment. He found him pale from the loss of blood.

“An unfortunate affair this, mine uncle. Heaven knows how many days and weeks may elapse ere this at present useless limb will be fit for service.”

“I trust, my boy,” replied Mansfeldt, “it may not yet be required either for attack or

defence, but he who has thus scarred you is our prisoner."

"Faith then," observed Henry, "you have the keeping of a noble fellow. I saw him ever by the Duke's side foremost in the fray; I singled him out from the rest to essay my strength and skill; my honour was piqued, for he rather avoided the encounter; I pressed hard upon him, and called upon him to defend himself or yield: the former he was compelled to do, but still he seemed to hesitate, and somewhat stayed his arm ere the blow fell which disabled mine. I was unhorsed; our people came on him as he dismounted to raise me from the ground, and he was made, in aiding me, his enemy, a prisoner."

Thou art a rash boy, Henry, and hold too cheap a life, for many reasons, dear to us; learn from an old and tried soldier, who never stayed his arm where courage could avail, that rashness is bravery gone mad.

I trust the hot blood which hath crimsoned the field to-day, will bring you to cooler reason ; had I heeded the sneer, and implied counsel of the wily Schmidt, who always thinks we deal too leniently with our prisoners, (although not foremost to place himself in danger,) or had not your opponent's candour prepossessed me in his favour, I might, in the wrath of the moment, have done him some wrong."

"How fares my sweet cousin ?" said Henry.

"As you would wish her, my dear boy," said Mansfeldt, smiling,—“much moved by your disaster ; to-morrow she shall thank you in person for the paling of her cheek to-day ; but for to-night you must dispense with further talk, or attendance, save of those who will watch you.” He then turned and quitted the room.

Our captives were well inclined to retire to their allotted apartments.

“Otho,” said George, “the lady Mathilda

is a fair maiden ; she seemed to lend a willing ear to your talk of travel."

"And a less willing one," replied Otho, "to Count Heideck's report of her cousin's danger ; 'pon my life I never before was so much out of humour with this right arm of mine."

Some days elapsed before Henry could quit his chamber, nor was he impatient under a restraint which yielded him so much of his aunt's and his cousin's society ; nothing crossed their mutual affection ; the sky of their destiny was clear, and they looked not for coming storms, which might dim its brightness.

Each day Duke George found his imprisonment less irksome ; but each day Otho's manner became more sad ; his companion's raillery was of no avail to draw him from his long fits of abstraction, and the only moments which appeared to bring relief to him, were those he passed in conversation

with Mathilda. This discovery seemed to irritate his companion. Otho, for a time, was too much absorbed in his own reflections, to take note of the pique which the other displayed ; but George's fiery temperament could ill brook such apparent insensibility, and he sought for an opportunity to vent his spleen on his offending, although unconscious companion.

Mansfeldt had refused every overture for the release or ransom of his prisoners, but put no restraint on their persons ; their parole was given, and accepted ; and within the walls of the city they were free, till the closing of the Castle gates at sun-set, to parade the confined limits of the town.

Spring was advancing, but it brought no genial warmth to the heart of Otho ; he paced the corridors with listless strides in melancholy musings. Wandering one morning into the long gallery, which ran at right angles with a narrow passage leading to

their apartments, he suddenly staid his steps and leaned against the deep embrasure of one of the windows, contemplating with varied and bitter thoughts, the fair scene which lay stretched beyond the walls and the Elbe. The tents of the beleaguering army arose like dots in long files beneath, although too far distant to discern from such a height their shape or count their numbers. Otho was unconscious for some minutes that other eyes were directed to the same view, but a voice addressing him, caused him to look up.

“A fair field, and well laid out,” said Henry; “if numbers will win our walls, we may despair of effectual resistance, or bespeak these towers to be our tombs.”

“I trust not that,” replied Otho, “for although not of your persuasion, I am not bigot enough to believe that carnage can be an acceptable or appropriate offering to Him, by whose name we designate ourselves.”

“And yet your practice accords not with

your speech, as my disabled arm gives me evident proof."

"Fate," answered Otho, "has carved for me the trade of war, but I love neither its abuses nor its excesses; and if fame did not blow her trumpet in praise of glory, and drown in its echoes the cries extracted by the manifold calamities which warfare brings, we should, in after life, look back upon our bravest deeds with horror and repentance, and write them down as murder."

"I trust," said Henry, "we shall not hereafter be called to account for them under this denomination."

"I hope not," replied Otho, "or at least that the onus may fall on those who needlessly provoke war, or who unnecessarily continue it."

"Now tell me truly," said Henry, "what staid your arm when we encountered some days since?"

"I should fear to offend you," answered Otho, "if I were to state all the causes

which induced me to parry, rather than to return your onset."

"Fear not!" replied Henry, "for although you balked my skill, my life was spared by you."

"Many hurried thoughts, brave youth, swept through my mind at the moment; I knew you by the bearings on your shield; I had heard that you were the beloved scion of a noble house; and pardon me, I did not believe that we were equally matched; you are somewhat my junior, and this your first essay in arms; such a victory would have added no leaf to my laurels, and I love not to spill blood for blood's sake."

Henry's face mantled, but Otho's name, though young in the field, was already known as one of high chivalry, and he felt that the candid declaration which he had elicited from him, was not tainted by vain boast.

From the end of the corridor, the Coun-

tess and her daughter now approached, accompanied by Duke George.

“Ah! Mathilda,” cried Henry, “vainly have I sought for you in bower and hall; I began to suspect, that you had taken the form of a dove, and on light pinions borne, had sped your flight to yonder host,—the harbinger of peace.”

“I wish I could,” replied Mathilda, with a sigh; “how gladly would I burthen my wing to bring back such joyful tidings;—but my cousin, your search, if I judge by the distance from your chamber, hath not been over wearisome.”

“’Tis never wearisome to seek the prize we hope to find,” said Henry; “and my seeking might have been continued for two good hours to come, if I had not intruded myself upon Sir Otho’s meditations.”

“I suspect they embraced a wide field,” observed the Countess, gazing on the expanse of country which lay below.

“They did indeed, lady,” sighed Sir Otho, “as far as thought could span, and as rapidly; they included the sorrows of the past, and the hopes and fears of the future; unlike the gentle bird Count Henry quoted anon, my thoughts found no resting place, but with flagging wings, returned to their cheerless home.”

“You should stay the flight of such profitless wanderers, Sir Otho,” said Mathilda, “unless like summer-bees, they bear some honey on their wings.”

“This were too hard a task, lady, while memory and want of occupation, enlist upon their side, to free them from restraint.”

“I will then be their taskmaster,” said Mathilda, gaily; “my cousin, the knight of the armed sling, for this same lack of occupation, hath broken the cords of my lute; and as he hath not able hands wherewith to repair the damage, I shall charge you to restring it; but on condition that you tune it to a higher key for mirthful melody than such

sal musings give warrant of, or our song will resemble rather the wail of the wild Indian, than the tuneful outpouring of blithsome hearts, and the evil will be but little amended."

"Most gladly will I do your bidding, fair lady; and when your fairy fingers sweep the chords, the lark shall cease his carol, in wonder at the imitation which will so far excel his song."

"To the tilt, Sir knight, to the tilt, with this soaring bird," cried Mathilda; "we will bring his courage down, till he twitters like a sparrow in the ivy of your tower."

And off she darted, calling, as she passed, to the pages, who were in attendance at the end of the corridor, to follow.

The instrument and seats were quickly brought; and when the lute was put in order, Otho handed it to Mathilda.

"No — no, Sir Otho, if my unskilful hand should mar your tuning, we shall lose our promised victory."

“Remember,” rejoined Sir Otho, “I am but the squire to bear your lance, until you take the field.”

“Then it is my pleasure,” cried Mathilda, “that you try the temper of the weapon, ere I venture to run the tilt.”

“If I do,” he replied, “I must intreat the shield of your indulgence; but as a squire I must obey;”—and he sang a roundelay of exquisite sweetness, and with the skill of a perfect master.

“The bird is beaten! fairly beaten!” exclaimed Mathilda.

“Pardon me,” returned the knight, “the squire hath but trotted round the lists.”

“Now come forth, fair champion,” said Henry, placing the instrument in his cousin’s hands. “You truly are the challenger of the field, let it not be said that you are craven, and fear to measure sounds.”

“You speak interestedly for the honour of your race, Henry; I question if you will

be a fair umpire between me and this herald of the morn."

"Perhaps not," he replied, in a whisper, "if love be the theme of your lay."

"Go to, cousin Henry, I will not indulge you, or place your honesty in such jeopardy."

The gay and beautiful performer was declared victorious.

"And now, Sir knights, what guerdon for my hard fought battle?"

"Victory," cried Otho, waving his bonnet, "and the homage of all true knights."

Thus passed two hours; but Mathilda was obliged to confess, that Otho's excellence was even more prominent in the grave than in the gay; her end was answered, she had whiled him for a time from his habitual sadness.

Not to Duke George did such pastime yield pleasure. Those hours to him, had been hours beset by contending passions. It was evident

that the cousins considered themselves as plighted; but whether the perfect tranquillity of assured mutual affection (a tranquillity he could not understand), an affection encouraged and approved by their parents, combined with Mathilda's playful bantering manner to her cousin, misled him into a belief that theirs was rather a compact of convenience than betrothment of the heart, and might be set aside, he certainly did not feel the jealousy of Henry, which Otho's accomplishments inspired.

The quiet, melancholy manner of the latter, increasing from day to day, with the interest which Mathilda took to draw him from his sadness, added to the young knight's refinement, so calculated to win the favour of a delicate and high-minded maiden, stirred up every jealous feeling of the Prince's nature, and blinded him to a the noble excellence of character he had ever before been willing to acknowledge that his companion possessed; nor could

he account for the subdued and more tender manner of his noble hosts towards him, whom he now looked upon as his rival; in the Countess this was exhibited in look and tone,—in the Count by a deference to his opinion. The Duke stopped not to consider how widely different their characters were.—Otho seemed to expect nothing, to exact nothing, as one who had no claim on kindred or on friendship; George was more eager to bend all the world to his will, and to force that will although at the spear's point; his opinions were delivered with impetuosity, and he would have preferred strife through danger and difficulty, rather than brook contradiction.

“Upon my life,” said the Prince, sneeringly, as they paced the ramparts together in the afternoon of this day, “you will be the David of our camp, if Maurice ever gains us freedom this side the grave—only that for the royal harp, we must read lute.”

“It would be well,” answered Otho, quietly, “if such weapons would ensure conquest—there would be less carnage.”

“Your association,” continued the Prince, in the same tone, “with these ladies, has made you as dainty on the subject of war as a beardless boy, who has never belted sword to his side, or clad his limbs in steel.”

“Say rather upon the miseries consequent upon war, Duke George; many a lusty knight hath mourned over the foe whom his strong arm hath struck to the dust; and many a victorious commander has viewed the field, when the heat of battle was over, and the dying and the dead lay stretched around him, with sorrow.”

“If such be your reflections, Otho, why did you not select the cloister? ’twere more befitting such womanish thoughts.”—

Otho stopped short, and looking his companion full in the face, said :—

“What mean you, Duke? It is not requisite that I should vaunt my courage, or defend my fame; both have been acknowledged by, and are known to none better than yourself; if to abhor the unnecessary shedding of blood, and substitute reason for often times brute courage, be woman’s creed alone, she is man’s superior;—if for reasons which I ask not, nor care to know, you wish to rid yourself of my society,—say so, but use not contumely to detach me from you; a friend who will not use his sword against you to resent it. I sought your standard with some few men at arms,—a soldier of fortune, but not a marauder; I have followed you for some months, and faithfully have performed, as I have held my engagement. If our imprisonment does not invalidate our compact in arms, at any rate it does not bind me to your companionship in captivity—I shall solicit other quarters.—Farewell.” And Otho quitted his fiery companion.

The Duke, judging by his own headstrong passions, fully expected a different result, and was turning to dare Otho to the fight, when the relief guard came up, and while it was passing to the different posts, gave him time to reflect upon the rashness of such a proceeding; he could allege no offence against Otho, who had abstained from noticing repeated taunts, and had borne the same respect to him in manner.—What excuse could he make to Mansfeldt for such a wanton attack upon his fellow prisoner, and hitherto companion? that he was in love with his daughter, the betrothed of his nephew? perhaps he was hardly prepared to acknowledge to himself that he had by his jealous impetuosity lost the society of a friend, who had solaced many a lonesome hour, and upon whose bravery and judgment he could equally rely.—But happily for human nature, conscience—that busy and intrusive monitor—whis-

pered to him some intimation of the truth, although reluctantly admitted, and nearly smothered, before age could mature its speech, or headstrong passion would suffer reflection to nourish the nursling.

Otho sought the Count, and requested a removal to other quarters.

He little cared, he said, for personal convenience, he feared much that his quiet habits were irksome to the Duke; indeed in this he spoke as he believed, for the truth had never occurred to him: he was conscious how dissimilar were their tastes, and in most matters their opinions; and considered that his sad sober views, were ill assorted to a prince whose soul was in his sword.

His request was readily accorded, and he had far less reason of the two to regret the separation.

The Count did not doubt the reasons which he alleged, for the desired separation,

for there was a singleness of heart in all he said and did ; that the veriest sceptic could not have doubted that he possessed in the highest degree that greatest beauty in the human character—truth—without which attribute, however high in talent, however brave in action, the mind of man is but a chaos of deformity ; but he was convinced there was some cause, unknown even to himself, for the Duke's distaste to his society, especially watching the characters of the two young men as he had done.

A short time revealed to him the truth, and most anxiously did he look for the hour which would rid him of his captive. From Otho he had nothing to fear, his manner was watchful and kind, but there was neither love, nor jealousy in his eye ; and whatever his sorrows might be, it was evident they were blended with an anxiety which he had brought with him, and which had daily increased upon him ; his general

information, and the polish of his mind and manner, rendered him such an acquisition in chamber and in hall, that Mansfeldt reflected with regret, that the hour which would relieve him from one prisoner, must deprive him of the society of the other.

CHAPTER IX.

As Otho had foreseen, a messenger in the person of Hendrick was sent to hasten the Baron, who had before received dispatches requiring his aid, as we have mentioned at the commencement of our story.

Maurice's deep laid schemes of policy, required every augmentation to his force, which he could either obtain or command, in order to reduce the Magdeburghers to capitulation.

As Reiterstein's standard, from the un-

scrupulous sort of warfare which he waged, attracted all loose and disorderly adventurers who infested the country, it was particularly an object with the Elector to engage him in his service, in order to relieve the neighbourhood from these marauding pests, and not only to strengthen his own army virtually by numbers, but also to intimidate by the numerical report of his besieging host.

Otho's followers, had been somewhat tamed under his steady command; they were a mixture of Spaniards, Italians, and Germans. Maurice therefore decided to add them to Reiterstein's band, while Albert of Brandenburg willingly held the command of Duke George's body of free adventurers during his involuntary absence.

The Baron, on their way to the camp, used every persuasion to induce Konrad to enrol himself in his troop, but finding that he steadily declined to enlist himself, viewed

him with no favourable eye, and ordered a vigilant watch to be kept over him. It was rare in these times, even among the higher ranks, to meet with men possessing the common rudiments of education; a youth therefore of Konrad's attainments, might be a useful assistant in a camp, where there were so many conflicting interests; and where trust-worthy messengers were required.

Towards the decline of day, Reiterstein and his troop entered upon the plains. In the distance, Magdeburg reared its gray towers; a heavy cloud which portended a storm, tinged on its extreme edges by the setting sun, formed a dark back ground, whilst the steeples of its many churches, with their glittering vanes, and the lofty spires of the cathedral of St. Maurice, rose above its massy walls. The spirit of resistance to the invaders was manifest, from the redoubts and fortifications, by which it was

additionally defended. The whole shone out in strong contrast to the purple clouds above, and the bright green of the open country. Thus stood Magdeburg alone, and high in her majesty; the forest of tents scattered in lines and groups upon the extensive flat, appeared like the habitations of pigmies, who were intent rather to smother this giant of the plain by their swarms, than attempt its destruction by any regular force they could bring against it. Small troops of horsemen were perceived cantering in different directions in search of forage, and here and there a single trooper was to be seen conveying orders to the different outposts and commanders; but few of those signs of active warfare were to be observed, denoting the energy necessary in order to reduce a city, which still held out, after a siege of some months.

“If this be Maurice’s mode of warfare,” remarked the Baron, “the commanders of

the besieging army are likely to leave its termination as an heirloom to their sons ; verily one could think they were encamped to view some gay tournament."

A small party of horsemen were now riding leisurely towards them from the camp ; the foremost, a man apparently under thirty years of age, was above the ordinary height ; his well-proportioned figure was unmatched for gracefulness, he was of fair and florid complexion, his eye keen, penetrating, and full of fire, but the peculiar expression of his countenance was that of watchfulness, mixed with valorous daring ; no sight or sound seemed to escape his rapid observation ; a bland and kindly smile at times played over his features ; there was nothing of cruelty even in his most fiery moments, but a slight occasional contraction of the brow bespoke deep and concentrated thought, mingled with some anxiety. He was mounted on a stout jennet, and unarmed,

save with a sword, which was suspended from a broad belt of red leather, richly embroidered in gold. A tightly fitting pourpoint of blue velvet laced with silver, did justice to the elegance of his figure ; a mulberry coloured cloak of cloth, hemmed and overlaid likewise with a broad band of silver, secured by a thick cord, and tassels of the same, fell over one shoulder. A black velvet bonnet, looped on one side by an emerald of unusual size, and from under which his hair curled thickly, completed the costume of this hero,—the assertor of German liberty and of her religious freedom.

On his right rode a man, his senior, but more stalwart in his proportions. Every line of his face was marked by boldness and determination, and you might seek in vain for one soft expression to mitigate its severity. He still retained the cuirass, but his head was undefended, save by a cap of red velvet: such was Albert of Brandenburg. He bestrode

a heavy charger; which seemed to require a strong and master hand to keep him in obedience; his curved neck, distended veins and nostrils, showed him of noble breed; an officer rode by his side, while two troopers followed.

“By my glove,” said Hendrick, “the Elector and Duke Albert; I will ride forward and apprize them of your coming.”

“Do so,” replied the Baron, “and learn our station, for I conclude there are quarters allotted to us.”

“No doubt, Baron, you know Duke Maurice executes, in an hour, what would take another man half his life to con over; he is ever before-hand with time.” Thus saying, he spurred forward.

The Baron and his troop slackened their pace; a short parley, and Hendrick returned.

“The Elector, Baron, desires you to join him; I will conduct your men to their quarters.”

The troop wheeled to the left, preceded by Hendrick, while the Baron and Konrad rode forward to meet Maurice.

“Welcome Reiterstein,” said he, “I fear we have somewhat hastened your march, but in truth,” he added, smiling graciously, “we need our ablest and our bravest leaders to reduce yon obstinate city to obedience.”

“If I were to judge, Duke, by the peopling of these plains, my small force is scarcely required for the accomplishment of this end.”

“Baron de Reiterstein must be an acquisition,” returned Maurice, “where bravery is not at a discount.”

The Baron’s services were in fact, of little account to him for carrying on the siege, but it was well to secure them for hereafter considerations; he would be useful for laying the country under contribution, or to do such duty as men of more honourable feelings might hesitate to undertake;

and besides, he would decline no action, however desperate, if plunder was likely to accrue ; therefore if Maurice doubted, and did not respect him, yet as a tool, he might serve his purpose.

“Yon city looks as tranquil,” said the Baron, “as if there had been no watchers around its circuit for the last six months ; your Highness’ army must be somewhat weary of noting its defences, numbering its loopholes, redoubts, and embrasures.”

“Say eight months, instead of six, my good friend,” replied Maurice, boldly, “and the time will not have been mispent, if they have conned their lesson well by heart ; you are fortunate in coming more tardily into the field, to profit by an abridgment of their observations and their catalogue.”

“I love not an idle life, your Highness, and you considerably studied my taste, for your despatches reached me only three days after my return to Reiterstein,

where many matters demanded my presence for a time."

"And who may this youth be who accompanies you?" asked Albert; "his garb savours not of war; is he a follower from Italy?"

"Not so," replied the Baron, "but one whom I thought might be useful; he is a youth of capacity, and some learning, and may assist your Highness's officers to a readier method of calculating the strength of yonder fortifications."

Maurice did not choose to notice Reiterstein's sneers, but backing his horse, waited for Konrad to come up; at one glance he read the youth's character in his open and intelligent countenance; he seemed misplaced with the Baron.

"And so, young man, instead of arms you bring some learning to our camp; upon my life an unusual market for such a commodity; but you offer us that which is somewhat scarce, and may not be won by sword or pike."

“Pardon me, your Highness,” replied Konrad, respectfully, “I would fight if the cause and the commander pleased me, but not if the former be against my conscience, and plunder, not honour, the reward.”

Maurice looked at the young man with some surprise.

“Your speech, young sir, is a bold one; your tone high for your apparent condition, and which of these reasons may have decided you to prefer a more peaceable profession?”

“’Twere hard to tell your Highness, where either is sufficient to weigh down the balance, and to deter an honest man. I will not fight for those who are armed against my faith, neither will I bear arms for, nor do the bidding of one, who might exact that which would sully my name, humble as it is, and burthen my conscience, the purity of which is equally dear to prince and peasant.”

“What seek you then in such a scene as this?”

“That chance, your Highness, may befall of employment or service, when the siege is concluded, with some gallant commander, or perhaps a peaceful occupation within the walls of Magdeburg.”

Maurice’s quick eye again surveyed Konrad, and nodding, he pushed on to join the others. A short distance brought them into the middle of the camp, where the Elector’s tent was conspicuous by its size and banner.

Reiterstein again mounted his horse, and accompanied by an officer, sought that part of the field allotted to him and his body of men. Konrad stood at the opening of his tent long after their departure, contemplating a scene so new to him. By degrees silence reigned around, and as the sounds of warlike preparation ceased, the elements seemed to take up the strife. Quick

flashes of lightning succeeded each other, and danced fitfully athwart the towers of the devoted city. Thunder rolled on in deep-mouthed cannonades, and burst in claps, which seemed to threaten annihilation to the fragile tenements around.

Konrad smiled, and thought, "if knowledge were still hidden in benighted ignorance, it might be imagined this awful storm was a manifestation of divine wrath."

"How paltry," he reflected, "do all the contrivances of man for the destruction of his own species appear, in contrast to these evidences of supreme power,—effects produced by natural combinations, but all ordered, all regulated by the one mighty hand who rules omnipotent."

The storm came sweeping on; the lightning now darted its forked tongue at brief and briefer intervals, and a smoke at some distance proclaimed that it had struck its prey.

With breathless haste, Konrad flew to the spot; some tents were on fire; they were those appropriated to the suttlers and the women, and close to the baggage wag-gons. The peril was imminent; the terrified women were equally afraid of the fire, or of encountering the terrific storm: but the soldiers, accustomed to the clamour of the cannon, had not been disturbed by the gradual increase of the tempest; there was therefore little assistance at hand. Konrad rushed among the burning tents, and dragged from one a woman, too much paralyzed by fear to find her way out. He called loudly to the few men by this time assembled, to cut the cords of those adjoining, and clear them away. Conceiving him to be an officer in command, he was promptly obeyed, and a space soon cleared, but not before many of these temporary dwellings had been consumed. Konrad paused for a moment from his exertions, and cried joyfully:—

“The rain comes !”

It did indeed descend in torrents, and ran with velocity down and overflowed the narrow trenches which were formed as drainage to the encampment.

By this time, numbers of the officers and soldiers had assembled. Maurice, ever on the alert, and alarmed by the magnified reports of the immediate danger to the whole of the encampment in this quarter, involving probable destruction to magazines and stores, and dreading, in case of such an event, further outbreaks of mutiny, arrived with some of his immediate officers on the spot. He had witnessed the intrepidity of Konrad who, certainly had, by his promptitude and courage, been the means of stopping the conflagration, and saving the baggage waggon.

The women were soon sheltered in other tents, and the rain, which had arrested the flames, rendered further assistance needless.

Konrad, drenched, his dress soiled, and singed, by smoke and fire, turned to retrace his steps to his own quarters,—when Maurice's voice arrested him.

“Young man, you have done nobly; come to my tent to-morrow, before mid-day, —good night.”

It was nearly daybreak, before the youth sought his pillow. The Elbe rose high; the besieged in despair, saw their mills carried away by the turbulent waters, and their means of subsistence rendered doubtful.

A breach was made in their ramparts, and destruction from the warring elements appeared likely to forestal that which was threatened by their enemies, who possibly, like themselves, might feel the afflicting hand of Providence. The senate lost no time in idle lamentations, but sought with vigour to repair the evils caused by the irresistible storm. Boats were constructed for

the conveyance of provisions to the brave garrison, but of this resource they were quickly deprived by the vigilance of their opponents, and with grief they saw all their hopes of receiving the succours collected by Mansfeld's exertions cut off.

CHAPTER X.

TOWARDS mid-day Konrad bent his steps to Maurice's tent, before which two halberdiers were keeping sentry. In vain he urged the order which he had received the night previously from the Duke himself; they were still obdurate, and could not leave their post in order to ascertain the truth of his statement. Disappointed, he was turning away to seek some officer of the elector's household, when, the altercation being heard within, the captain of the guard

appeared, to whom Konrad repeated the command he had received from the Duke ; a similar one had just been delivered to him for the youth's admission, when he should present himself to claim access to the presence of the Elector, who was sitting at a table which was strewn with papers ; his brow was clouded with thought, and marked by displeasure, mixed with care.

“ And so, Albert ” he said “ these are the manifestoes which the good citizens send forth in my favour, but I heed them not ; they shall not drive me from my purposes ; their heads are as senseless as their own woolsacks. I would rather have it so ; it assists my operations for their advantage.”

He now looked up, and said with a sly smile, “ And so, young man, you come to claim some consideration for last night's exertions, and well you have earned it.”

“ Pardon me, your Highness, I came by your desire ; I have no claim, and do not

wish to proffer any, seeing there is no ground on which to build it."

"You think then that your readiness and courage do not demand some recompense?"

"Any person would have done the same, your Highness; my late arrival placed me in the rear, and nearer to the conflagration than others; thus my speedy appearance at the time of need was accidental."

"It is well, but your self applause will not push your fortune. Who are you, and what your name?"

"My name is Kourad; Shröder my father is a Lutheran pastor, and dwells in the village below the Castle of Reiterstein. I am his only child; my views and hopes I mentioned to you, when you condescendingly spoke with me yesterday."

"You have received," said the Elector "as Reiterstein tells me, a good education."

"My father, noble sir, is a pious and a

learned man, and if I have not profited by his instruction, the fault is mine."

"And would you wish to change your service?"

"I should, sir, but I have so far engaged with the Baron, that I could not at present quit him without a breach of faith."

Maurice smiled. "I doubt if the Baron will be difficult on this score; I suspect he will be here anon to crave some leave of absence, and I shall make it conditional that he resigns his claim on you. No doubt we shall find employment for you, if you answer the hopes I have conceived of you. After my interview with the Baron, I will let you know further."

He bowed, and Konrad left the tent.

As Maurice had foretold, Reiterstein, in the course of a few days, made his application for leave of absence, and the Duke in return, requested the transfer of Konrad's service. The Baron could not refuse,

although, since Hartorff's report to him in the wood, of the conversation he had held during the journey with Schwartz, he did not wish to lose sight of, or abandon his power over the youth. He contented himself with believing that Maurice would keep him too constantly employed, to admit of his return to Reiterstein. Konrad, on the other hand, enchanted with his new prospects so far beyond his most sanguine hope, rejoiced to instal his person and his small property, the latter consisting only of his slender valise which looked as if it would benefit in bulk by being sent on the recruiting service,) in his new quarters, leaving a few groschens with the grateful creature whom he had rescued from the flames.

It was necessary for the Baron, before he left the camp which he had so recently joined, to regulate his military affairs, and issue many minute instructions to Hartorff for his conduct during his absence. This

delay little suited his inclination, but Maurice was peremptory that the Baron's mercenaries should be left in a state of discipline fit for any service or emergency, and although he used all diligence in bringing into some form and order, the disorderly members who daily enlisted themselves under his command, many days elapsed ere he could take his departure. On the tenth morning by early dawn, he was in the saddle, and left the camp at a brisk trot, attended by two stout veteran troopers. We will not follow him minutely on his journey, which he pursued with short intermissions of rest, towards Luneburg, whose extensive heaths and wide wastes he traversed rapidly; the close of the fourth day brought him within sight of the venerable convent of Walsrode, the object of his journey.

A loud summons at the gate called forth the old portress, to whom the Baron signi-

fied his wish to speak immediately to the lady Abbess.

“Wait a while,” she replied, “and let me tell the superior who it is that would see her, and your business.”

“Tell her, the Baron von Reiterstein claims an audience and waits her pleasure. As for my business, it matters not. Come, quick, old crone,” he added,—seeing the ancient guardian still anxious to learn more before she ventured to announce a stranger into the sanctified presence of the Abbess,—“I have no time to dally, evening is at hand, and we have still to seek a place for the night’s repose.”

“Old crone indeed,” retorted she, “old crone, old crone,” increasing in anger as she repeated the disrespectful appellation, “is this a fit speech to one who keeps the gate of Walsrode ; no doubt he calls himself a knight, but by the token of his spurs only, I guess ; his civility to a damsel would not betray

him as such,"—and still the offensive name by which he had designated her, was muttered as she crossed the quadrangle to the entrance of the convent. Leisurely she announced the visiter to the Lady Abbess, commenting, at the same time, upon his unknightly manners.

"Never mind, good Willfhild, he is a rude soldier, tired with travel, and somewhat out of humour; the sooner I see him the better,"—and as Willfhild left the parlour, she added, in a low tone, "it is a disagreeable duty, and I shall be more at ease when it is disposed of. I had hoped that foreign gold would have kept him still far away, and spared me this meeting." Her pale cheek was tinted with an unusual glow, as she made this reflection. Reiterstein entered, and the Abbess rose with stately demeanour to receive him.

"Lady, I have come to claim my ward at your hands; I should rather say my bride,

for such it is my intention to make her. I would gladly speak with her, and prepare her to quit the home you have so long granted her. I have journeyed in haste from Magdeburg, and my movements must be rapid."

"I will not then delay to inform you, Baron," replied the superior, while her full blue eyes gazed steadily upon him, "that it is not in my power to restore to you the lady Clotilda."

"What!" exclaimed the Baron, starting, "is she dead?"

"Not so, Baron; Heaven forbid! that such a sorrow should have befallen me, or that one so fair, so young, so good, should have been called hence in the bright days of her youth."

"What then," said he, "you have not surely induced her to take the holy habit? Your convent will have added a portionless member to its community."

“I doubt that,” she replied with meaning, “even if such were the case ; but again you are wrong in your supposition ; Clotilda has not professed, at least, at our altar.”

“Saints in Heaven ;” exclaimed Reiterstein furiously, his dark countenance expressing alarm and anger, “where is she then ?”

“She is gone from hence,” replied the Abbess, “and was removed from our care after your departure for Italy.”

“Removed, say you, madam ? who dared to remove her ? How dared you to resign to other hands the keeping of a ward of mine, intrusted to you by me ? How dared—”

“Hold, hold,” interrupted the Abbess with calm dignity, “I dare do much without the Baron Reiterstein’s permission, who brought me no documents to prove the maiden a ward of his, and who deceived me by falsehood, and lulled all suspicion by spe-

cious deception; I dared to obey the authority of those higher in power, higher in sanctity than him."

"And may I ask, reverend lady, who were those in authority audacious enough to usurp mine?"

"I may not tell, sir," she steadily replied; "nor more than this, that Clotilda is not here, I know not where she may be, and if I did, my lips should be sealed in silence. I have rendered you all the information I may give, and nearly all that is in my possession. The main fact I have truly stated, that she is not here, and that she was taken hence by those who had more right to remove her, than I to detain her." She then bowed gravely and quitted the parlour.

To endeavour to pourtray Reiterstein's rage, would be a waste of words, for none could be found of sufficient force to express it. Every angry demon seemed maddening

in his brain. His eyes were bloodshot with passion ; he stamped impotently on the floor, he swore he would back to Magdeburg for his men, raze the convent, devote to destruction its inmates, carry fire and sword through the province. By degrees this frantic violence subsided, and he resolved to seek in every corner of the empire for the innocent victim who had eluded his grasp. Such a misadventure he had never anticipated ; he conceived, that like a miser's hidden treasure, Clotilda was secured from human knowledge ; that there was no one living who had power to claim her ; that he could abstract her at will from the convent ; and that there were none who could deny his right to do so. Who could come between him and his prize ? Whoever they might be, they should feel his vengeance. What clue had he by which to recover her ? None.

Again he sent to request speech with the lady Abbess, but she sent him word that she

had no further communication to make. Much agitated by this interview, she retired to her chamber. She well knew of what the Baron was capable ; fortunately she was shielded by the strong arm of the church, which, although shaken by the rapid diffusion of the new doctrines which received support from some of the electors and princes in the northern states of Germany, still retained an overbalance of power under the Emperor's protection ; in all cases it could assert its rights, and was enabled to preserve its sanctuaries from desecration, and its immunities from violation. Thus she remained buried in thought, long after her unwelcome visitor had departed, and until the closing day warned her that it was time to arouse from her meditations. A small silver bell summoned a lay sister.

“ Gertrude, I wish to see Schramm ; seek him in the garden, he is ever late among

his flowers. If not there, let him be found and sent to me."

Again she relapsed into thought, from which she was diverted by a faint tap at the door, and Gertrude presented herself, followed by a person somewhat remarkable in appearance. He was clad in a doublet and hose of gray serge, and held in his hand a cloth bonnet of the same colour. Of his height it was not easy to judge, for he was bowed and bent, either by infirmity or labour. His person was attenuated to extreme leanness. A deep scar across his forehead, extending to the cheek which was pale, gave rather a ghastly expression to his face, which his scanty grised hair, leaving his forehead bare, did not relieve. His eyes were gray and sunken, and yet with these symptoms of age, you would not have pronounced him to have been a man of fifty. His eyes were downcast, and there was trepidation in his manner. He advanced, bowing respectfully.

“Daughter,” said the Abbess, addressing Gertrude, “you may leave us.”

When the door was closed, she beckoned for her visiter to approach, which he did until he came close to her side.

“Madam,” he said in a whisper, “I expected this summons. I have seen him, and know his errand.”

“I trust,” she replied, “that he did not recognise you.”

“No, Madam,” he replied in the same low tone, “he did not see me, and if he had, it is not likely that he would have known me, unless conscience had carried back his memory, and then he would have believed that the murdered haunted him,—that the grave had given up its dead.”—

“I dread him,” said the Abbess with a shudder, “and would take some counsel of you. Think you that he will discover Clotilda?”

“If art or villany, lady, can compass it, he will.”

“He stated,” continued the superior, “that he must return forthwith to Magdeburg, but in truth I was too eager to rid myself of his presence to ask him any questions. I marvel that our good father Augustine hath not journeyed hither as he promised. His absence induces me to believe that he is watching her safety : still I would wish to be assured that they are warned of his return.”

“Give me your commands, lady, and neither danger nor distance shall prevent my search : Heaven grant that I may not leave this life without offering some atonement for the evil I have wrought. Oh ! think you, pious lady,” added the unhappy man, while the tears dropped from his eyes, “that there can be pardon for such sins as mine ?”

“True repentance, Schramm, will find mercy at the throne of Him who searches all hearts ; happily for you your sin did not prosper you, and the seducer of your virtue

hath been the chastiser of your crime." You sought gold;— he denied it to you ; you were enticed by love for one, who proved herself faithless, and left you for the arms of your and her betrayer. His secret was not safe while you lived ; he waylaid to assassinate you, and hoped by your death that no witness would remain to appear against him ; and your child, whom your faithless and miserable wife, believing you no more, confided to him ere she died, has been lost to you. If revenge animates your zeal, your proclaimed repentance is but self-deception, and will not be acceptable to Him, who promises to us forgiveness as we learn to forgive."

Schramm bowed his head. "Alas Madam ! then dare I not hope for mercy ? Hath he not corrupted my soul, seduced me from home and virtue, seared and maimed my body, robbed me of the wife of my bosom, torn from me my child, left me an outcast, and

rendered my life a loathsome burthen, my body an object for compassion and scorn, and my mind borne down by sin and remorse? Surely such crimes as his cannot meet pardon, even from on high."

"Of this, Schramm, it is not for us to judge, nor the amount of retribution which may be awarded to him in another life. In those realms above, where the Father of all reigns in his everlasting glory, will he be judged, and suffer for the evil which he hath consummated in this transitory world; but had he not done all these wrongs to you, you might have persevered in your infamous career, and shared with him hereafter that condemnation, which you believe will be passed upon him: his crimes towards you, I devoutly hope, will prove the means of your salvation. Go, Schramm, and pray rather that repentance may visit his darkened soul, ere the last account be demanded of him."

"I will, lady; indeed I will, nor shall

one of your soothing and holy words bloom without producing fruit upon the heart of the wretched but repentant sinner before you."

Reverently he bowed upon the Abbess's hand, saying:—

"As I know you would wish, so I will do," and slowly withdrew.

In the morning, Schramm was searched for in vain.

CHAPTER XI.

MAURICE had discovered some symptoms of discontent among the troops, which now broke out into open mutiny. Their pay was already in arrear ; many did not like the service, and were backward and lukewarm in their duties ; such were chiefly the German Protestants ; but his master spirit from time to time quelled these murmurs, and dangerous outbreaks. His genius, even more fertile in moments of difficulty and danger, was ever on the alert to turn all

events, however unfavourable their aspect, to his own account: watchful and enterprising, no opportunity escaped his vigilance, or was lost by his inactivity; his delay therefore before Magdeburg the more puzzled those who served under him, and were accustomed to the rapidity and correctness of his judgment, and the celerity of his operations. Autumn was at hand, but his plans had been long matured, and now the season for the preliminaries to their execution began to press. He knew that he stood in a doubtful relation with both parties, Protestant and Catholic; but this conviction neither accelerated nor retarded his movements; his refined policy enabled him to keep both at bay; his game was so fixed in his own mind, the chances so nicely weighed and balanced, that he felt assured he could play it at the time most consonant with his own views, and win it.

There were but few slight elevations to

relieve the uniformity of the plain, upon which the encampment was formed, but towards the site of Maurice's tent, the ground sloped slightly upwards, and the few feet attained by this inclination gave him a view of his outspread forces; with folded arms he gazed below; an involuntary sarcastic smile played on his lip, as he reflected how adroitly he moved and regulated these puppets,—each striving for his individual interests,—whilst he, without their perception, combined and directed their ambition, pride, envy, vanity, cupidity, fanaticism, party feuds, private animosities and jealousies, all to his own purposes. A feeling of contempt for his own species stole over him, thus to find beings so blinded by their own puerile and ignoble schemes, and base passions, that unconsciously and subserviently they worked out the will of a transitory being like themselves. But mentally he exclaimed:—

“They have done it, and shall do it still ; nay, the proudest, and the highest of all these insects of an hour, one to whom all knees are bent, who rules o’er lands and draws the wealth of mountains, mines, and vallies his eye hath never seen, by the power and terror of his name alone, who can condemn to gibbet, sword, and flame, swarms of the human race who will not read their creed like his, whose policy will be the theme of after days, and strain the wisest intellects to fathom and dissect :—he too shall feel that Maurice is his overmatch, and be compelled by him to leave free thoughts to men, who struggle for the right to offer at their altars pure worship to their God, untrammelled by despotic laws, proclaiming death or obedience to priestcraft, bigotry and superstition. ’Twas God who called thee, Charles, to thy high destiny —’twas He who gave the sword of justice into thy hands, and knowledge of His holy

book to temper it with mercy. But fire and flame have overspread thy foreign lands,—priestcraft has been upheld by thee, and His most precious testament hath been perverted as thy plea to yoke the souls of men, and stain its sainted leaves with spots of blood. He hath consigned the infliction of His wrath and punishment of thee to humbler hands; those lands, at least, where Maurice rules, shall see no faggots blaze, unhallowed offerings to Him who reigns above. 'Tis hard to sacrifice such hordes of men; but more cruel far to leave interminable war and slavery of soul to generations yet unborn."

As these high thoughts swept rapidly through the mind of Maurice, he looked upwards to the vast expanse above him, glittering with unnumbered stars. One splendid meteor blazed for a moment, and darting fell athwart the sky.

"'Tis ominous," said Maurice; "well!

be it so, if thus HE WILLS. Before I fall like yonder meteor, my work will be well nigh accomplished, and my destiny fulfilled ;” and slowly he turned towards his tent.

Konrad was awaiting his coming. Throwing his cap upon the floor, he seated himself at the table, mused for a few moments on the plans before him, and dismissed Konrad. As the latter retreated, the curtain of the tent was drawn aside, and the tall figure of the monk presented itself in the opening. He bowed slightly, and advanced to the table.

“Welcome, good priest, most welcome.”

“I fear, Prince, that I am more tardy than I promised ; but I have made the best speed I could.”

“You have delayed a few hours only, Father, but I greatly need your aid.”

“As peace maker I trust, Prince ?”

“Even so ;” and now Maurice detailed his

plans, and the occurrences of the last few days.

“And may I enquire of your Highness what leave you have granted to Reiterstein?”

“Rather more than enough to come and go. I was obliged to allow him some days grace, lest he should suspect I knew his errand.”

“He will then,” said the friar musingly, “make a hasty visit to Reiterstein, and I much fear, spite of all precaution, will pounce upon his prey.”

“How so?”

“Because he will send scouts in every direction, and that unfortunate detention at the woodman’s hut will put him on the scent, if he chance to pass that way.”

“Not a moment must be lost,” replied the Elector, “we have yet, I trust, some short time to provide for her security; he cannot already have left Walsrode. Now, friend, to your rest, and I will summon Konrad.”

Two hours before noon, on the following day, Konrad accompanied by a flag of truce was before the gates of Magdeburg. Mansfeldt commanded him to be admitted. He was speedily conducted into the governor's presence, and having delivered the dispatches with which he was charged, waited respectfully at some paces distant while the Count perused them.

Mansfeldt pondered for some moments, and having made a sign to the attendants to withdraw, beckoned for the young man to advance.

“Are you acquainted with the contents of these dispatches?”

Konrad replied in the negative, and stated that he was newly enlisted in the Elector's service.

“You would then deem it most prudent that I should give my answer in writing?”

“I thought it right, sir, to put you on your guard, as owing to my brief sojourn with the Duke, I have as yet had no oppor-

tunity of proving my fidelity. From my present mission you might suppose that I was in his confidence."

Mansfeldt smiled, for he perceived that Maurice, with his usual clear sightedness, had selected, as his messenger, the one most calculated to conciliate his prejudices. He moved forward to summon again his attendants, when Konrad drew nearer, and said :

"I am further charged, Count, with a communication to one of your prisoners;" at the same time drawing from his bosom a packet.

"I would humbly pray your permission to deliver this. It is unsealed, and the contents regard alone the person, to whom it is addressed. I promised if possible to deliver it myself, and be the bearer of the answer."

The Count received the letter, and observed :

*As part of my duty, charged as I am with the preservation and defence of this city, I ought perhaps to demand by whom it was delivered to your care."

"I have no hesitation in anticipating your question, sir : Father Augustine confided it to my charge."

"'Tis well," said the Count, and summoning those in waiting, desired them to request the presence of Sir Otho, to whom on his entrance he presented the letter.

Otho retired with evident marks of anxiety and trepidation to the window. An inclosure dropped on the floor, which he quickly regained, pressed to his lips, and then impatiently perused. Turning, he said earnestly : — "Have I your permission, Count, to charge this youth with a reply to these papers ?"

"Granted, Sir Otho, for I doubt if treachery would find such sanction from your lips as that precious billet hath received anon ; an hour, I trust, will suffice to prepare our despatches."

He motioned for Konrad to withdraw, who was conducted by the attendants in waiting to the hall. We will leave them for a while, and amuse ourselves with a separate scene of the drama, which has been progressing, while we have been wandering over the country, as true chroniclers of the ways and actions of our other migratory characters.

It would be tedious to move the hands of our time-piece backward, and note each minute as it passed. It will suffice to give a bold outline, and state that, since George of Mecklenburg's separation from his friend, he had abandoned the reins of his reason, and given a wild career to his hopes and imagination; and was now as deeply in love as complete idleness, opportunity, and an ardent temperament permitted. He suffered no doubts to check his pursuit, for although not a vain man, he could form no conception that his suit, if once declared,

could encounter opposition, or that any previous claim could be preferred to his pretensions; nor was any coquetry on Mathilda's part necessary to induce this self-confidence. It was his nature in love or war, to bear down all opposition, and arrogate to himself supreme power.

Mathilda could not suppose that he would indulge in hopes unwarranted by her manner to him, and at variance with her father's intention of bestowing her hand upon her cousin. As love is apt to render the vision more acute, and even to magnify the objects it represents, Henry saw more clearly the state of the Duke's affections, but Mathilda gave him no cause for jealous fears; the glances of tenderness or approbation from her soft eye, were ever for him; the pointed jest or gentle word, for his ear; the trusting confidence, for his counsel; he watched to shield, but did not doubt.

The trio were passing through the hall, while Konrad was waiting there for his despatches. The Duke's eye caught the form of the stranger, and addressing one of the halberdiers, who was parading the hall, demanded if he were a prisoner. The man replied, he believed the youth was waiting the Count's pleasure.

"His unstained, modest looking jerkin," said Henry, "bears a peaceable aspect; they seem to have made him welcome to a hard bench, and an empty board."

"Alas!" said Mathilda, "such parsimony is a sign of the times, for war and hospitality are sadly at variance. I foresee with grief the straits to which our good Town may be reduced: already I fear the hand of famine begins to press his bony fingers in fellowship with some of our poorer classes of citizens."

"Hush! hush!" said Henry, "we must not betray our possible privations.

It would be as well to question that sober looking youth: he may take notes, and carry a report of your speech to the camp."

Our famished looks," observed the Duke laughing, "would hardly bear him out, if he sketches them also in his tablets."

Mathilda turned, and saw the blush of indignation on Konrad's face, as these aspersions of his honesty were bandied. It was an evidence that their conversation had not passed unheeded by him, and as certain a one, that it would not travel beyond the limits of the hall.

"Good youth," continued Henry addressing Konrad, "we wish to learn your privilege for listening to our speech?"

"The Count's commands," he replied, "to wait his pleasure here."

"And did the Count instal you in the office of eaves dropper?"

"Nature, sir, gave me the sense of hearing, and honour hath taught me not to

misuse the gift, or the information it may chance unwittingly to place in my possession. This, I hope, will be sufficient to satisfy your misgivings, if I have gathered hints from a conversation which I did not seek to hear."

"You have been too hard, Henry, and unlike yourself," said Mathilda; "why suspect the youth's intentions to be unworthy?"

"'Twas wrong," whispered Henry, "but peril begets suspicion, and remember how much I possess within this fortress, to render its security the object of my life."

Henry gently drew her arm within his own, and passed through the hall. They were met at the upper end by a page, with a summons from the Count for his nephew's immediate attendance.

He found his uncle in close conference with Count Heideck. We will not forestal our narrative by detailing the particulars of this interview. In the space of an

hour he returned, and accompanied Konrad to Mansfeldt's presence.

As they traversed the passages leading to his apartment, Henry's manner apologized for the roughness of his first salutation ; he observed, that in the present critical position of the town and fortress, it was the duty of every one connected with its safety, to be on the alert against spies or treachery.

"Believe me, sir," said Konrad, "the Elector is incapable of such means to carry out his views."

"Report says," replied Henry, "that he is a crafty Prince, and uses policy to back his valour."

"True, sir, but both are of the highest grade, and if he had thus descended, he would have chosen an abler messenger."

This short parley brought them to the door of the Count's private chamber. It was a small but lofty room, panelled with dark oak;—the windows narrow, but high and

deeply splayed, shewing the immense thickness of the walls. A suit of inlaid russet armour ready for immediate use, with a few prime arquebusses, pikes, and pistols, were suspended from the walls. The flooring was of oak, corresponding with the panels, with a low door nearly opposite to the one of usual entrance.

Konrad was desired to give his signature for the paper delivered into his charge, and was again conducted to the gates by Henry, who by Mansfeldt's order, whispered to him, before parting, the pass word for the night.

The Duke, in the mean time, had not been idle ; upon some pretence he had lingered, and detained Mathilda in the corridor, and there with his wonted vehemence, declared his passion. Surprise and distress rendered her incapable of reply, while the Duke continued to pour out his impassioned harangue.

“ Fortune, at last, fair Mathilda, has

befriended me ; and granted me the opportunity of offering that homage, which, from the day of my captivity, has panted on my lips. I have been doubly a captive, but an unrepining, and to you, a willing one ; and my release can bring no joy, unless assured that your fair hands will bind me anew in dearer bonds.”

“ You surprise and grieve me, Duke ; I thought that you were aware of the engagement between my cousin and myself ; I lament that, unconsciously, I have induced you into a belief that my attachment could change its object, or that in my desire to render your residence among us less irksome, I have misled you into a declaration of affection, which I blush to receive, and cannot return. I will not prolong your wanderings in error, which I did not anticipate, and which cause me infinite concern.”

“ Is it possible, fair Mathilda, that woman’s

vanity hath never whispered to thy heart, the inevitable fate of those, who flutter like giddy moths around thy light of beauty? Thinkest thou, that unless allured into the vortex of thy numberless attractions, I could contentedly have left my sword to rust within its scabbard, and borne so patiently a captivity, which beyond all other ills, I dreaded most?"

"I am no judge, Prince, of your motives for bearing, with becoming fortitude, an evil you could not remedy. I conceived that your magnanimity pointed out to you the best method of enduring, unrepiningly, your misfortune. By my father's desire, my poor exertions were joined to aid you in tolerating a probation we felt must be at best, a hard one. We could not foretell that our limited endeavours could have been so misconstrued. I might well retort the charge of vanity," she added with some asperity, "if you can indulge in hopes

scarcely honourable, to supersede my cousin Henry in the affection of his affianced bride."

"His bride?" quoth the Duke in wrath, "a stripling, whose blade has but recently flashed its maiden light, and knows only of deeds of war from nursery tales. He, thy father's ward, with name and station yet unknown; he to o'erstep the claims of George of Mecklenburg."

"'Tis even so," replied the maiden, piqued by his contempt for her favoured cousin; "Henry will prove, as he has done, his valour when occasion needs, and that is what a woman loves in her protector, and not the eternal clash and talk of arms; the pipe of peace is preferable to the fearful whoop of war;" then calmly added, "Henry hath my father's consent and mine."

"A covenant," said the Duke, "to join possessions, and he is welcome to his lordly

fiefs ; my sword shall win a dowry and jewels rare to deck my bride."

" You must wed an amazon then, Duke," she retorted, almost amused by this novel mode of wooing ; "gauds wrested from others by such violent means, would be ill-suited for a female's wear, barring the plumes to shade her eyes from scenes unfitted for her sight ; but you forget that the Emperor has deprived us of lands and wealth."

" If this suit you not, lovely Mathilda, I will dedicate my arms to your favourite Otho's patron saint, and learn like him to lisp soft numbers to a lute, watch your cunning fingers as they ply the silver threads, and breathe into your ear the tales of sunny lands as he does, provided such sacrifices will win you to a kinder mood."

" They will not, Prince ; my faith is plighted, and had Sir Otho used his talents

to lure me to a breach of it, they would have been as distasteful to me, as your wild wooing. Do not, I entreat, mar your own peace and mine, by a repetition of such declarations, for indeed they will avail you nothing, but rob you of the friendship I freely offer."

"I see it all," said George distractedly, "your cousin's suit is but the plea to shield my favoured rival."

"Your doubts are anything but courteous Duke; if guilty of so mean a subterfuge, I should be unworthy of the homage of a true knight; it would be beneath me to combat further such an accusation;" and Mathilda withdrew, leaving her impetuous lover discouraged, but not subdued.—

CHAPTER XII.

THE bells of church and tower were giving out their lengthened sounds to the hour of nine as two figures passed in earnest conversation up the middle aisle of St. Maurice's cathedral. The voices of the speakers scarcely reached a higher tone than a whisper. As they confined their promenade strictly to the centre of the broad long aisle, no one could approach within earshot undiscovered.

“It is even so,” said the elder speaker;

“Maurice’s desire is to spare the city and the citizens, but the terms of surrender must be such as to satisfy the Emperor; he pledges his faith to mitigate them hereafter, as may be agreed upon beforehand, toleration equally to those of our church must be the prominent article assured in the convention.”

“Fear not, monk, my ready compliance with this demand; our church, unless infuriated to retaliation, is meek and peaceful, and does not require coercion to extend and support its pure and simple doctrines, nor have we any right to invade the privileges or worship of our catholic citizens, they have not suffered, and they shall not suffer wrong while I command in Magdeburg.”

“’Tis well, Count; the Elector demands personal communication with yourself, as time and place may best suit for both parties, and lastly, he prefers a request, not a condition.”

“Name it, good monk ; I am not disposed to refuse Duke Maurice any boon, which may come within the bounds of my duty and ability : I feel confident, that he would not harass me by any proposition to transgress the one, or go beyond the compass of the other.”

The monk’s whispered request caused the Count to ponder for a short space ; he then replied :—

“Most readily, father, I will grant the Duke’s desire, if Heideck should approve the concession ; believe me, to do so will yield me as much gratification as the Elector or yourself can experience in obtaining it ; at this hour to-morrow meet me here, and you shall have my final answer ; I trust it may be the one I wish to give.”

They then separated—the monk disappeared among the cloisters, and the Count re-entered the Castle.

In the evening subsequent to this inter-

view, but at rather a later hour, four persons similarly clad in holy garb slowly and silently bent their steps to the gates of Magdeburg. But few words were exchanged at parting, two only of the party passed the barriers, and proceeded to the camp. The pass word secured them from interruption, and they reached Maurice's tent unmolested. Ere the moon was high in the heavens, a troop of twenty horsemen armed to the teeth, were crossing the plain at a brisk pace.

One of the two persons who quitted the fortress two hours previously, had exchanged his cowl for a light coat of mail and helm; he rode a little in advance of the others with a companion; the latter was armed with sword and pistols, his body was encased in a doublet of thick leather; and a dark blue cloak of stout cloth, a plain steel skull-cap protected his head.

For many miles the country which they

traversed was level, and would have given evidences of fertility, if Duke George had not devastated the fields, and burned the farms and villages. Towards the confines of the territory of Magdeburg, marshes in places, somewhat perilous to cross, and thick woods, rendered their progress after a while more tedious, and their chargers were frequently floundering deep above their fetlocks in the swampy pools; still they kept their course onward, in a compact body; and had traversed many weary leagues ere they gave themselves and their steeds some rest. The commander of this small troop appeared to possess unlimited control over the wills of his men; they were emulous to anticipate his orders, and a sign seemed a sufficient communication to regulate their movements. There was only occasionally an interchange of words between him and his comrade, but those brief sentences were apparently earnest, and of

deep interest to both. Three hours after day-break, they entered a small hamlet; the assurance of payment and peaceful intentions soon produced the best entertainment the miserable gasthaus afforded, which was scarcely palatable even to hungry travellers; but mine host was assiduous, and the provisions contained in the village, in addition to the produce of his meagre larder, furnished sufficient edibles to ward off the immediate cravings of appetite. The leaders of the party quickly partook of their breakfast, and were anxiously engaged in laying down the plans for further and speedy progress, but brief as our notice has been of their wayfaring, we must leave them for a time.

It would be supererogatory to trace their travel through bye ways and woods—their difficulties in finding fords over the tributary streams which feed the mercantile Elbe, their short cuts across the country, in order

to attain the ultimate point of their journey with the least possible delay, or the tormenting anxieties which they endured when unforeseen obstacles impeded their speed,—their hard riding, scanty fare, and repose rather for their horses and men than for themselves, in miserable hovels or villages reduced to ashes, the embers of which, were still reeking from the incendiary flames.—The few inhabitants who had saved themselves by timely flight and had ventured to return to search for some traces of lost children, parents, or friends among the smouldering ruins of their homes, were too destitute and famished to yield food or shelter even in exchange for gold. Our readers can readily imagine all this, in an era when Germany was not as it now is,—the resort of tourists for health, information, or pleasure; not as it now is,—the abode of civilization, learning, arts and commerce; but as it was in the middle of the sixteenth

century, when the dark clouds of the middle ages were but slowly clearing away, when religious war distracted the country, and the little learning existing in states, which now stand preeminent in literature and the arts, was confined to scattered monasteries, or the few more recently founded universities. What between the remains of vassalage, the imperfectly suppressed, and hitherto almost licensed robberies and feuds, the peasantry, if they could have obtained, although scantily, some of the comforts of life, dared scarcely to indulge the hope of permanently retaining possession of them; the property and domestic peace of the nobility were alone secured from invasion by lofty towers, and strongly fortified holds; (thus it might well be said that every man's house was his castle;) those who were emancipated from vassalage, and possessed the means, talents, and industry to pursue the golden road of commerce, were obliged to seek the neighbouring impregnable fortress

of some powerful noble, in order to protect their gains ; or when congregated in sufficient numbers, to strengthen their position by surrounding their cities with castellated walls. The peasants with their families, inhabiting lone cottages and villages, were left exposed to oppression and death, under all their most terrifying and terrible aspects of war and plunder. Thus had it been, and thus was it still in a great measure at this epoch ; the population did not increase, or improvement ameliorate their condition. Ere the sun of Rome had set, it shed its lingering, but departing glories over Europe ; its beams still for a space reflected some faint polish over its barbarian invaders, but myriads of unenlightened human beings, like insects from some swampy marsh, extinguished the fading light ; a long and wearisome night of darkness and anarchy succeeded ; horror, desolation, rapine, and superstition, struggled

in contention during this long obscurity, and man was left to grope his undirected way towards the returning sun of civilization; violence alone gave law—the law to which the feeble were compelled to bend; the code of Justinian was overwhelmed, and for a time lost as if it had never been; meanness of condition was slavery; even that lowliness of state gave no protection.

Thus ages wore away, ere a misty and slow revolving dawn gave promise of a brighter day. At the present season, the plains of Magdeburg had been in many parts reduced to profitless wastes, by the unsparing hand of selfish and rapacious ambition; and although historians may term Maurice a crafty politician, as well as an able and brave commander, and although such means can hardly be justified by the most admirable results, still it is to be considered that he contended against one who worked by subtle rules when his resources

were inadequate, when his arms were unsuccessful, or their power doubtful, and that although it cannot be denied that his private views of self aggrandizement appeared in a great measure to be the spur to the exertion of his abilities, yet, ultimately he was the cause of the toleration which was secured to the Lutheran doctrine in 1555, by the treaty of Passau, and that but for his preponderating influence over the other states of Germany, he never could have achieved such a glorious result,—a result so eminently beneficial to posterity.

CHAPTER XIII.

“Go on, good Krantz,” said Clotilda, “I never weary of these tales of the by-gone days of my parents, and every circumstance connected with them, is dear to me. How befel it that my father could ever trust or harbour one so base as the present representative of our house.”

“He did not trust him, lady, but he could hardly imagine that one so young could be so wicked. He was his cousin, and poor,

though nobly born, and your father who knew no guile himself, offered him a home. He was then but eighteen, and until my beloved lady's death was not much with them. She never liked him, nor did any about the Castle ; he was a sullen, hard hearted youth ; and even then gave promise of becoming what he now is. After your mother's death, he was more frequently an inmate at the Castle, but grief for her loss so preyed upon our dear master, that he took little note of his cousin's proceedings. He came and went as it suited him, and certainly tried every art to win your father's confidence, but there was no sympathy between them, and they passed little of their time together. As male heir, the Castle would be his, but the lands belonging to the fief were limited, and by no means sufficient to keep up any state."

"The allodial possessions, which had been purchased from time to time by your

ancestors, were extensive and fertile, and these were to be your inheritance; so your father willed it;—that testament fortunately was placed in Father Augustine's keeping; he had been my lord's tutor and confessor from his youth, and still continued to live with him after his marriage, although often absent on the distant duties of his church. The Baron mad to find that he could not obtain possession of this document, if, as he suspected, for he was never told, there was one in the friar's possession, and not daring to use force, which all my lord's retainers would have resisted, hit upon the foul scheme of carrying you off; he was not then quite so hardened in crime. Poor old Hilda's son, then a youth, was seduced by him to aid in this vile act; he was attached to your nurse, and by promise of reward and her persuasion, he helped to execute what the other had planned. You may imagine the distraction and confusion at

the Castle when we missed you. Every search was made in vain, and thus for more than a year, with short intervals only, did the good priest and myself wander in every direction. I was obliged to return home; from my continual absences, we were fast sinking into poverty, and my wife was again about to be confined. The good priest, however, still promised that he would try every means to trace you, and the Baron's villany was the cause of his doing so. He had secreted you with the accomplices of his guilt in a lone hut, on the confines of Luneburg, far from any habitation. Schramm, who was now the husband of your nurse, found that she was as faithless to him, as she had been to her trust of you. He reproached the Baron with his perfidy, who feigned sorrow and repentance, and basely urged in extenuation, that the poor fellow's wife had used every blandishment to seduce him. Schramm was frantic, and but for the

sake of his child, could hardly have borne existence, for he tenderly loved the woman who had betrayed him ; he threatened, in his wrath, to declare to the world the treachery in which he had aided, and to restore you to your rights. No doubt this was repeated by his wife to her seducer, for one evening, as Schramm was returning from Luneburg, where he had been to purchase provisions, he was attacked by the Baron and Hartorff, whom the former had lately engaged in his service. They left him for dead ; they had come upon him unawares, for he believed them far away. At the time, Father Augustine was journeying from Hildesheim to Walsrode, and found him in a wood weltering in his blood, and scarcely alive. He staunched his wounds as well as he was able, and with the assistance of some peasants, of whom he went in search, carried him to a cottage. For many weeks, he lay between life and death. As

soon as he was able to give some account of these transactions, and point out the place of your concealment, the priest sought you out. The wretched woman's conscience was awakened when she heard of the violent death of her husband, for the good father did not tell her that his life was spared. She heaped bitter reproaches on herself, and promised faithfully to restore the child ; he bound her to secrecy, until he could return with means to remove you. Alas ! when he did so, the hut was deserted, and the good man was as much at a loss as ever to discover where you were concealed. The Baron had won the secret of his visit from the guilty woman. As soon as Schramm was able to work, he found employment in menial and trifling offices in Hildesheim, for his health was too much impaired for hard labour. When the priest returned, after an absence of two years, he found him sinking under poverty, sorrow, and sickness ; he provided him with

some means of subsistence, and sent him to the good Abbess of Walsrode, requesting her to employ him in the convent gardens. When he had been there for some months Father Augustine's duties called him to the convent, and there he found the treasure he had so long sought. It appears, as you know, that the Baron had induced the Abbess to receive you, and requested that she would allow your nurse to remain awhile, until you were accustomed to the strangers about you, nor could she refuse the urgent entreaties of the woman not to be parted from you. She, poor creature, did not live a month, and on her death-bed disclosed all her seducer's villany; but for your sake and the safety of her child, whom she had left in his care, she entreated secrecy. When Schramm arrived, she had been dead nearly two years, but he knew not how to convey this information to his preserver. Schramm's father

died broken hearted, and poor old Hilda never mentions her son's name. The priest sent me this intelligence as soon as he was able, but bade me do nothing, as you were in safe hands with the most exemplary of women, who would evade any proposal of Reiterstein to remove you, nor did he purpose to do so, until you had attained the age of eighteen, although he occasionally visited the convent, to assure himself of your safe keeping. When you arrived here, you cannot be surprised that I did not know you; but well I remember your father, ere he died, fastening that cross round your neck; it was always worn by My Lady. Many accused the good priest of being a party to your abduction; he did not discourage the idea, and has never since been in this neighbourhood to be seen of any but myself."

"Alas! how it grieves me," said Clotilda, "to hear so sad a tale of Schramm, but now

I can well account for his strange manner, and his melancholy countenance, which seemed as if it had never been crossed by one happy thought, or known one cheerful smile. Now can I understand the cause of those bitter tears which he was wont to shed, when I chanced to meet him alone, or accompanied by the Abbess only in the garden ; he used to look so mournfully in my face ; and then at times when I begged the tempting fruit, he never failed to pluck for me the finest and the ripest ; he would place it in my hands, and rush from me in agony ; early and late would he watch for me, and kindly accede to all my childish whims ; plant and replant the little plot of ground assigned for my hours of recreation, as each new fancy took me for some more showy flower ; and that kind Abbess, how gently would she rebuke his sorrow, preach repentance, and hold forth better hopes. I was then too young to understand all this,

and wondered why so kind a man should grieve, and look, and be so sad : and as I grew in years, his watchfulness seemed to increase ; although the high walls enclosed the garden from all without, his eye was always on me ; every sound seemed to startle and alarm him. Upon those occasions, which were rare, when the Baron visited the convent, to assure himself that I was still its inmate, though unobserved by him, he was ever loitering near, and I thought at such times I could perceive the handle of a poniard in his vest."

"His treachery," observed Krantz, "has fallen heavily on his own head ; sorely has he been visited for his ingratitude to those, who aided his honest parents to rear him."

"And yet," replied Clotilda, "how greatly have my parents' virtues sheltered my infant days, when surrounded by peril ; how protected me, when I was unconscious of the neces-

sity which existed for assistance ; but my child, Krantz, my darling boy, how I tremble for him.”

“ Lady, he thrives, fear not for him ; he is safest where he is, till the danger of your present situation be past. At any hour you may be compelled in haste to quit this shelter, as yet his birth is unknown. When the pastor stated to me, that a child had been confided to, or rather forced upon his care and humanity, I advised him, in order to stop all enquiry or idle speculation, in which village gossips might indulge, to say that he was an orphan intrusted to his rearing ; but as he was scrupulous on this head, I have spread the report for him. I love not falsehood more than he, but I trust the necessity may excuse the act.—”

While this conversation was passing at the mill, a feeble and wayworn traveller bent his steps to the village ; he often

paused as each remembered spot greeted his searching and anxious eye. He descended to the brink of the stream, bathed his face and hands, and entering the village, sat himself down on the stone bench before the small gasthaus, looking up at the Castle towers with a heavy sigh. Voices of merriment within caused him to draw his gray bonnet closely over his brows; hardly had he done so, before two men made their exit from the house.

“Come! come! Brandt,” said the younger of the two, “thou hast had beer enough; one would think from thy fondness for that flagon, ’twas thy twin brother;”

Then, looking good-naturedly upon the weary traveller, added—

“Thou hadst better bestow the rest of its contents upon this wayfarer, who seems to need some refreshment; it will be doing a charity to thy brains, which are well nigh drowned, as well as thy stomach, and then

thou mayest chance to find a straighter path homeward.”

So saying, he took the flagon from him, and presented it to the traveller.

Brandt looked stupidly on, holding out his hands for the restoration of his idol.

“No, no more, go thy way, and sleep thyself sober ere the night watch is set.”

The fellow looked wistfully, but did as he was bidden.

“Thanks sir,” said the man, “it is a welcome draught.”

“You seem rather tired, master, and not over robust for a long journey.”

“And yet,” rejoined the other, “I have within some days trodden many and many a weary league, and in truth am well nigh exhausted, so much so that I doubt if I can travel further to day.”

“Rest here then, my good friend, mine host will gladly furnish you with a night’s lodging.”

“I love not a gasthaus,” replied the other; “is there no quieter abode to be found, think you, for a weary man?”

“Upon my faith I know of none, unless old Hilda can help you where to seek one, for she seems to have been born ere the church was built, and knows not only every cottage, but verily I believe every chamber in the village.”

“Hilda!” said the man with some emotion musing, “old, say you? Is she alone?”

“I believe so, I have never seen any living thing with her but a jackdaw, who pecks at passengers, and seems to do duty for a house-dog which I reckon she is too poor to keep. I doubt me if the daw, by his cannibal appetite and his ferocity, ever knows the dainty pickings of a few dry crumbs.”

“Will you direct me then, sir, where to find this poor creature?”

“Oh! for the matter of that I will go with

you; the old woman hath done me some kindness, and I fear of late I have neglected her; besides, she is not over fond of strangers."

The man took his staff and bundle, arose, and they quitted the village together. A few minutes walk brought them to Hilda's cottage. She was sitting before her door, plying her distaff as usual.

"Ah master," said she, addressing Ludwig, for it was he who had conducted the traveller, "I have been watching for you; I feared you had forgotten the lone old woman. I know not why, I seem to count for your coming; but whom have you here?"

"A traveller, Dame, who wants a lodging for the night, and finds the gasthaus too full of company to suit his liking, for he is weary. I thought mayhap you could tell him where to find rest for a few hours."

The traveller, during this short parley, was leaning against the mud walls of the

cottage, and gazing on Hilda. He moved at the conclusion of Ludwig's speech, and coming closer to her, scrutinized her features with curious eyes, then entering the cottage into which they followed him, looked around, as if in search of some familiar object.

"Where gottest thou this old oaken chest, Dame?" he demanded.

"Got it," said Hilda ruffled, "what is that to thee, friend?"

Again he looked steadily in her face.

"Had'st thou once a son, Dame?" he exclaimed hurriedly.

Hilda tottered to a seat, her arms fell helplessly by her sides, and she cried, "I had; what of him? knowest thou aught of him? dost thou bring tidings of him?"

"I do, for I am HE, I am THY SON," and he threw himself upon her neck. "The troubles I have brought on thee, and long years, have sadly changed thee, mother."

Hilda sank fainting from her seat, Lud-

wig ran for water, and having sprinkled her face, laid her on her pallet. It was some time before she could find utterance, then sitting up, she looked disappointedly at him.

“No, thou art not he; he was a blooming youth; no, it cannot be.”

“Indeed I am thy son,” and going close to the side of the pallet, he leant over her, and whispered a few words, and the old woman sobbed upon his bosom.

After a pause Ludwig said, “Dame, as you are better, I will leave you now; I think,” turning to the traveller, “I need not seek further for a lodging for you.”

“Not so, good youth,” said the traveller hastily, “I would speak with you before we part; and if time does not press with you, I will beg you to remain a few moments longer, for I must intreat your forbearance, not to tell any one of my presence in this place. Now one question, mother,

which I dare hardly ask ; knowest thou aught of my boy ?”

“Thy boy ?” replied Hilda, “I knew not that thou hadst a son, thou forgettest that.”

“Oh ! no, mother, too well I remember all ;—I dared not seek thee. Years of repentance have, I trust, somewhat blotted out mine iniquity and my shame ; I have found thee alive, but where shall I seek my boy, my own Ludwig ?”

Ludwig at this mention of his name, started from his seat ; “Ludwig said you ?”

“Yes, young man, so was my darling, my only one named.”

“How were you parted from him ?” demanded Ludwig in hurried accents.

“He was left with the Baron Reiterstein, but those who have sought for him since could never gain tidings of him.”

“Have you no token, no mark to know him by ?” asked Ludwig.

“Alas ! none ; but they did tell me that his

mother, ere she died, placed her wedding ring around his neck, offering a prayer to heaven that he might keep it holier than she had done; the Baron alone knows his fate."

"Should you recognize the ring?" he demanded in agitation.

"Yes, among thousands."

Ludwig hastily drew from his vest the ribbon to which was fastened the coin and ring; this was eagerly examined.

"This, this, is it! how came you by it?"

"That I cannot say, but it has ever been mine, I have worn it thus from childhood."

Schramm (for it was he) still hardly dared to believe that he beheld his son. His eyes wandered wildly over him; he arose; he again seated himself; he pressed his hand upon his heart, as if to keep it within his bosom; his whole frame was convulsed, but he was powerless to weep or speak, as he fell on Ludwig's shoulder.

Ludwig feared to move, or give way to the emotion which agitated him, lest in this direful struggle, he should find life extinguished in his new found parent: at length in subdued terror, he said, "MY FATHER."

This tender appeal seemed to recal Schramm's bewildered senses. Tears and sobs at last relieved him. Hilda taking the young man's hand, said affectionately, "My heart has ever yearned towards him."

Ludwig then related that for some years he was hardily, though kindly reared by some poor peasants. It seemed that the only atonement the Baron made to the unhappy woman whom he had so deeply injured, was in the injunction he gave to these people, not to remove the ring from the child's neck. They were superstitious about it, and made the lad promise, when he left them, never to part with it.

When the Baron removed him into his own service, Ludwig found that he had no

claim of kindred on them; he had never known any name, but that by which he was baptized. Krantz, fearing that Hilda might disclose Schramm's retreat, and endanger his discovery to the Baron, had never told her more than that he lived; of Ludwig he knew nothing himself. Schramm now related his story to his mother and his son, and then said:

“Now, Ludwig, it must be evident to you, that my life, and possibly your own, depends upon your prudence.”

Ludwig, in his horror at the Baron's complicated villany, exclaimed passionately:

“And this is the man I blindly believed to be my benefactor, the betrayer of my mother, murderer of my father, and thy oppressor,” kindly pressing old Hilda's hand. “This is the man for whom I have shed my blood, for whom I have watched and worked. Ah! that my sword's point were in his base heart. Father, I can no

longer eat that bad man's bread, or serve such a demon in human form ; but say, are we free, or like so many peasants of these lordly fiefs, the slaves of his will ?”

“ We are free,” replied Schramm ; “ the father of our loved lord whom I so basely betrayed, declared he would never be served by feudal slaves : he gave freedom to all on his lands, freedom of body, freedom of mind ; nor was that generosity repaid by ingratitude by any, save by me.”

“ This then is the reason,” said Ludwig, “ that the Baron always alludes to his uncle's memory with sneers and reproaches. Service of mine shall he never have more ; to his face will I dare him, and accuse him of his crimes.”

“ Forbear ! my son, forbear ! calm yourself, I will seek Krantz to-morrow ; now leave us, lest you be missed.”

“ My Father, I have time to spare ; and besides I command at the Castle during that

villain's absence. It wants two hours to sun down ; tell me, what will you that I do ?”

“ This, my son, that by word or deed, you let no one guess this meeting. Not our lives alone, but those of others may be endangered by such an indiscretion. If you are silent and watchful, you may aid, and perhaps,” he added with a groan, “ repair the mischief which I have done.”

“ I see it,” said Ludwig, “ and solemnly promise I will keep counsel ; but you want food, which my poor grandmother, I am sure, cannot supply ;” and hurriedly he darted from the cottage. He had hardly departed, when a whistle announced to Hilda, that the miller was at hand. He had brought a measure of flour for his poor neighbour. He was not a little surprised to find a stranger occupying a seat by her side. Hilda beckoned him to her ; there was a beseeching expression in her looks, as she pointed towards Schramm, who, in confusion, had turned aside.

“Krantz,” she said, “I had a son.”

“I know it, Dame, and luckless the hour for you in which you gave him birth; he hath helped to bring misery to many of us.”

“But, Krantz, he was my son.”

“Well, Dame, I will say no more against him; I hope, in his repentance, he will find mercy; but why speak you thus now, Dame, and before a stranger? I fear me your head wanders.”

Schramm now turned round, but no recollection appeared to cross the miller’s memory.

“Ah! Krantz,” he exclaimed, “you know me not; you do not recognize in the humbled being before you, the wretch whom your words have condemned.”

“Schramm!” cried the miller, “is it possible? so changed, not one trace of what you were?”

“True, too true,” cried the unhappy man, as he pressed his hand on his forehead;

“ changed, blighted I am, but penitent and punished, and humbly I bow under afflictions so well deserved.”

Krantz was now informed of the events of the morning, and that the son so long lost to his father, was found.

Ludwig soon returned with such fare as he could purchase. A short consultation was held; he again promised the utmost caution, and quitted them. The miller arranged that Schramm should join him early in the morning at the mill, and leaving him for the present with his mother, wound his way up the hill.

Clotilda and Theresa were soon in possession of the disclosures which had taken place in Hilda's cottage, and had reason to rejoice in the assistance which they might hope to derive from Schramm and his son, both of whom had so much cause to detest the villain who had so wantonly injured them.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHILST our indefatigable horsemen were snatching a short repose on the evening of their departure from the camp, we will turn to those who demand even more of our interest, as rendered, from their sex and habits, more helpless. Consternation prevailed at the mill, for towards the evening of the day, which had succeeded one of storm and rain, Krantz entered in haste, heated and troubled, and called his trusted inmates to immediate consultation; he had

been to the village, and on his way home had found Ludwig at Hilda's cottage, who informed him that the Baron had just arrived, and from orders issued, he had no doubt that he meditated some mischievous adventure. Krantz readily conceived that some mischance had revealed to Reiterstein the probable place of Clotilda's concealment, and that he would resort to immediate force to regain possession of her; nor would he scruple to devote to destruction the mill and its inhabitants, in order to compass his object; not a moment was to be lost, if escape was to be thought of; Thumelda would not hear of separation from Clotilda, for she said, "either in the event of escape or captivity, she will require my assistance."

Krantz prepared two stout horses; and the party having equipped themselves in garments suited to their mode of travelling, and having taken an affectionate and mournful

farewell of Theresa, in less than an hour bade adieu to an abode they had vainly hoped was secure from discovery; Krantz placed the light form of Clotilda before him, while Schramm protected Thumelda in the same manner. It was determined to procure additional horses at the first farm or village they might reach; every inch of the country, with all its paths, was well known to the miller, and he trusted that the few hours they had gained in advance, would lodge them in safety.

The heath was soon traversed, and the deep woods seen from the hill stretching beyond, held out hopes that their friendly shades would shield them from observation; but ere they could reach them, they would be compelled to cross a rapid stream which traversed the valley; when arrived at its borders, Krantz saw with despair, that the autumnal rains had so increased its volume of water, that the usual ford upon which

he had calculated, was no longer feasible; and that they would be forced to make a considerable detour, before they could find a practicable place, by which to cross over into the opposite forest; he did not hesitate, but spurred on, trusting that the obscurity of the night, although it rendered their passage more doubtful and dangerous, would cover their movements; a more fordable part now presented itself, but here as well the stream was rapid, and the horses at the first plunge were immersed to their girths; in ordinary seasons, it was of no great breadth or depth, but it was now extended much beyond its usual limits, and was swollen into a river.

Clotilda gave no expression to her fears, but was too much terrified by the noise of the rushing waters, and the evident difficulty which Krantz found in keeping his horse's head across the stream, to give any reply to his encouraging words: at last

happily they gained the opposite shore, and here it was necessary to pause for a few seconds, as well to await the arrival of their companions, as to give breathing time to their good steed, who sturdy as he was, broad of chest, and strong of limb, stood panting from the exertion he had been compelled to make, in order to stem the strong running stream, while the water dripped from his sides. Krantz looked anxiously over his shoulder for his companions, but Schramm was not as he expected in his wake ; with terror he cast his eyes around ; the current had been too powerful for the willing animal, who in spite of his own efforts and those of his rider to cross the tide, was fast floating down, being borne onward by the strength of the gurgling waters ; Krantz knew that at some distance below the ford they had attempted, there was a fall of many feet, and that if they continued in their present course, their destruction was

inevitable. Assisting Clotilda to dismount, he rode rapidly along the edge of the extended stream, to a point a little beyond where his companions were vainly struggling, and once more plunging into the swollen river met them, and seizing the bridle of Schramm's horse, landed them in safety. The poor animal, nearly spent, could scarcely keep on his legs. Schramm dismounted, and led him to the spot, where Clotilda, in an agony of suspense, was awaiting them. As soon as the over-wrought steeds could recover breath, and the fugitives had wrung some of the water from their garments, they remounted, and were soon under cover of the thick woods; Krantz producing his flask, which was hanging across his shoulder, made them partake of a cup of wine.—Their progress was slow, for they travelled in total darkness: and the morning broke ere they gained a broader path, which led to the outskirts of the

forest. They were now winding round the base of a low hill, the woods still on one side of them ; the horses were put to a brisker pace, and in half an hour an open and more level country was before them with a farm in the distance.

The travellers hailed with delight the prospect of some rest and refreshment, as Clotilda and her faithful companion were well nigh overcome by fatigue, for which their long confinement, and want of exercise had ill prepared them. Cantering through some fields of bright green pasture, they reached their destination. Krantz dismounted, and was heartily welcomed by the inmates of the farm, who speedily prepared a substantial breakfast, after partaking of which Clotilda and Thumelda sought some repose ; they were likewise willing to supply them with additional cattle.—Krantz with his usual activity, made every preparation, and took every

precaution, which his readiness suggested, and with as little delay as possible prepared for a continuance of their journey. He had already brought the steeds round, and was assisting Clotilda to mount, when his quick ears caught the tramp of horses; and before flight was possible, they were surrounded by, and in the power of their pursuers: Schramm fortunately had not come round from the stable; vainly Krantz fought, and struggled, he was quickly overpowered by numbers, and pinioned, while the two females were lifted almost senseless on the horses which had been destined for their escape. A trooper rode on either side of them; the miller was guarded in the same manner; the poor people of the house terrified by this sudden invasion, fled in different directions to conceal themselves; one of the men perceiving Schramm turning the corner from the stables, spurred up to him; it was Ludwig.

“Back! back!” he said quickly! “you can now do nothing, save yourself for those whom you would save; the beast will carry the prey to his lair.” Then turning his horse, he was quickly by the side of Krantz; one glance assured the miller of his fidelity. During this fray, which did not occupy the space of three minutes, so rapid had been the movements of the assaulters, so instantaneous the capture of the assailed, that not a word had been spoken. The Baron now gave the command to proceed; and dismissing one of Clotilda’s guards, took his place by her side; malice and triumph were struggling for mastery in his dark features, as he gazed on the almost inanimate but beautiful form before him: most unhappily for Clotilda, a new passion was stirring in his bosom; to call it love, would be to desecrate the name of love, for neither intellect, beauty, nor virtue, had the power to inspire one pure feeling in the animal nature of that dark man;—the indulgence of

lawless passions, like a tempest, which lays the fairest flower of hill and valley low, and leaves only the withered stem, and stunted sapling as land marks, to show the wreck of nature's works, had left their impress upon features, which heaven had originally stamped with more than ordinary comeliness;—his soul was a continued storm, or cloud, vacillating between contending vices, but never admitting one ray of benevolence or softer feeling, to illuminate his wayward and unbending nature; his manner was tarnished by the corruption of his mind; imperious and commanding, he was incapable of practising forbearance, or receiving that exterior polish, which is the gem of society, and adds lustre to talent, birth, and beauty: he had passed through life without one tender tie, nor could memory, had he tested its powers, have recalled a single act, which could redeem his soul from its chaos of crime; stern, selfish

and harsh, he might inspire fear, or elicit hatred, but there could be no affinity in a tender nature to link itself with his.

He rode on by Clotilda's side for some time ere he spoke, his large dark eyes wandering over her features from time to time. Hers were half closed and bent down, as if to shut out the form of a being who had well deserved the appellation of her evil genius; her thoughts were busy, and she felt how imperious was the necessity for the exertion of all her fortitude and energy. No complaint passed her lips; not a tear dimmed her eye, but the fervent and inward prayer was devoutly offered for strength of mind, to act with judgment and courage when the hour of trial should come.

They pursued a different route from that which they had trodden the night before, and as evening fell they arrived at the hut, where some months before Clotilda had,

with her guide, sought shelter in her way to the mill ; there was no doubt that Reiterstein had tracked her from this point, and if there had been any, his observation would have chased it.

“ These are poor lodgings, lady,” he said, “ but you will not object to harbour for a few hours, where, by your free choice, you spent some days.” She made neither reply nor remonstrance, but quietly suffered herself to be lifted from her horse.

It was a relief to find herself once more with Thumelda. The hovel consisted of two small rooms ; they had evidently been prepared (although hastily) for their reception. Thumelda’s fears were greater for her father than herself, for she felt assured, that if his fate hung on the Baron’s mercy, it would be one, from the contemplation of which she shrunk with horror ; she imagined her poor mother’s agony, when Schramm should reach their dwelling, and carry the intelligence of their capture.

Clotilda felt, indeed, that sad as her own position was, this poor girl's was infinitely worse, and she sought by every means in her power, to comfort and console her. Ludwig, she believed, would save Krantz, even at the risk of his own life, and indeed the reflection that they had a friend in the Castle of their enemy, was a consolation to both. Clotilda urged Thumelda to take food and repose, and gave the example.

"We shall have occasion," she said, "for all our physical as well as mental force, and to neglect any means for the preservation of either for the sake of others, whose happiness depends on us, will be culpable."

The gray morning found these companions in peril equipped for their unhappy journey, when a low tap at the door, prepared even as they were for a summons, startled them, for however we may have exerted our reason to bring our minds to the endurance of a certain and inevitable evil,

its immediate presence ever causes a revulsion. They paused to recover composure, and then answered the demand for admission. Ludwig stood with a cheerful countenance, bearing a basket with some provision for breakfast. Advancing into the room, he closed the door, arranged the contents of his basket on the table, and said softly, "eat, and take courage."

Clotilda, to whom it must be remembered that personally he was a stranger, looked at him doubtingly, but he quickly relieved her by adding :

"I am Ludwig, the son of Schramm; whatever you may see, whatever you may hear, follow my counsel. Do not judge either by my mannèr, or speech, but trust confidently in me;" he then left them, and these few words restored the appetite his presence in the first instance had chased away. In half an hour he returned, bade them prepare quickly, and follow him.

Thumelda, ere they mounted, looked anxi-

ously around for her father. His countenance was composed, but he appeared to writhe with torture, from the tightness of the cords which confined his arms.

The tears glistened in Thumelda's eyes as she imagined all the agony he was enduring. She was still more grieved, as turning to Ludwig, she perceived a repressed smile playing round the corners of his mouth.

"This man," thought she, "bids us trust in him, while he evidently enjoys the suffering inflicted by his base commander."

They proceeded in the order of the day preceding, winding through the forest; a deep ravine was now before them, and the path so straightened, that they were compelled to traverse it in single file. The Baron ordered two troopers to lead; he followed, then Clotilda and Thumelda with three troopers, Krantz and Ludwig brought up the rear. The ground was slippery from moss and damp, and their pace in conse-

quence slow. The horse which Krantz rode, suddenly slipped and fell with its rider ; his rein was passed through the arm of a trooper immediately in advance of him, who was also nearly unhorsed by the sudden jerk ; the fall appeared to have burst asunder the cords, by which the miller was bound, for in a moment he was up and free, and with one bound, darted into the thickest part of the wood.

Thumelda turned at the moment of her father's escape ; the same satisfied smile was on Ludwig's face, and she now saw the cause of that expression which had so much offended her, as they left the hut in the morning, and felt that he might indeed be trusted.

He pretended to shout and rave at the prisoner's escape. As soon as the word was passed to the Baron, the party halted, and Ludwig dismounted and rushed into the wood. In the space of half an hour

he returned, soiled and heated, swearing at his ill luck. "The fellow must have had all the imps of the forest to help him," said he, "but to search for him among such thickets and pit falls, I fear will be labour lost;" and certainly from the state of his face, hands, and clothes, he made it appear to be so: he said however that he was willing to pursue the fugitive, and urged the Baron to permit him to do so.

"Who pinioned the fellow?" said the Baron in a rage.

Schwartz replied that he did, with knots and cords sufficient to have harnassed a team of oxen.

"Bungling rascal," urged the Baron, "thou shalt pay for this;" at the same time dealing the man a heavy buffet with the flat side of his sword.

His rage would have lashed him on to murderous violence, had not Ludwig interposed.

"He well deserves what he has got, Baron ;

but the fact is," he added laughing, "he weakened the cord, by straining it so tight that the fall burst it asunder. I warrant the prisoner is too much disabled, too stiff, and too deeply cut by my comrade's fast binding, to go far, therefore if it be your pleasure, I will endeavour to track him."

"Do so, Ludwig, and take one of the men with you."

"Pardon me, Baron, but it would be a pity to weaken the convoy ; I flatter myself, that a wounded unarmed rustic is no match for Ludwig."

"Well be it so, but remember, if the fellow makes any resistance, dispatch him on the spot: it will save us the trouble of dangling him from the Castle walls, when we shall reach our destination."

Ludwig turned his horse quickly, and retrod the path by which they had descended the ravine, looked cautiously around, and making his way for some

distance through the brushwood which bordered the narrow path, gave a loud whistle, and Krantz stood unarmed before him.

“Thou hast saved my life, brave youth, and Krantz is not ungrateful. I fear you may suffer, if the Baron suspects your connivance.”

“Never fear,” said Ludwig, “the fellow who bound you may suspect, and try to clear himself at my expense, but I will manage that; take these pistols and dagger; they are your own, which on your capture I concealed about my person, use them fearlessly in your own defence, if any of our men discover and attack you; for once at the Castle, your death is certain. Hark!” he added, “that fellow surely is on our track. Away, hide yourself, doubtless he has dismounted; however, he shall find his way back on foot. Make for the road which crosses the forest between this and the hut, if you find his horse, mount it, and away.” He moved for-

ward quickly, and perceiving Schwartz's tall figure, and glittering arms, as he forced his way through the underwood, he took another direction and regained the path, where truly enough, as he supposed, the trooper had fastened his horse, and somewhat below the spot where Ludwig had left his own;—he broke the branch to which the rein was attached, leaving it hanging by a few fibres to the tree, and whipping the animal, caused him to rear and plunge, tearing up the ground, and leaving the marks of his hoofs deeply imprinted, as if he had freed himself from his tether by his own exertions; leading him to a distance considerably above the place where he had left his own horse, he drove him into the forest. Skirting the path, he regained his charger, and slowly proceeded on his way; when within sight of his party, he put his steed into a brisk trot, and overtook them about a mile from the Castle.

“ Well, what news ?” said the Baron.

“ I am sorry to say,” replied Ludwig, “ I have not succeeded in making a capture.”

“ And where is that stupid fellow Schwartz, whom on second thoughts I sent after you ?”

“ I have not seen him, sir ; I went alone.”

“ I know it, sirrah ; as soon as that dolt returns, he shall be taught in his person, how to secure a prisoner.”

The party now crossed the stone bridge, and in the course of a few minutes, the Castle gates closed on the unhappy Clotilda and her companion.

Krantz continued to elude his pursuer—deceiving him by an occasional shout or whistle, till he had bewildered him completely in a labyrinth of wood, and then made his way rapidly towards a cartroad ; here when he had proceeded for above a mile, he found the trooper’s charger, who was quietly feeding on the herbage by the road side : he sprang upon the animal’s back,

and before the morning, had regained the farm.

Fortunately Schramm had decided to remain there, hoping that through Ludwig, the miller might obtain his release, and join him : he urged Krantz to repose, and taking the horse led him round to the stable.

In the afternoon they were again mounted, but pursuing a different course from their first intention on leaving the mill.

After what had taken place, there could be no question as to the necessity of seeking immediate assistance. This perhaps was a forlorn hope, but it was the only one which suggested itself or presented a chance of rescuing Clotilda and Thumelda, from the hands into which they had fallen.—Krantz did not doubt, that Ludwig would do his utmost, but he was young, inexperienced, and equally with the others in the power of Reiterstein. The miller was not yet aware that Ludwig had studied his

master's character, that his gaiety had been subdued by the events which had lately occurred ; and that he burned to avenge the sufferings of his parents upon the villain who had caused them, by entrapping him in his own toils of wickedness.

The object now of the two anxious travellers, was to make their way as rapidly as they could to Magdeburg ; they pressed on in the direction which would put them in the way of reaching the camp ; they had kept the road bearing higher up in the forest, where they were less encumbered by underwood ; but they did not gain the one which they sought, and which ran at right angles to that which they had for some time been pursuing, till night had closed around them ; however they decided to push on by the light of the stars, for an uncultivated tract of some miles lay before them, and until they had passed this wild waste, there would not be a prospect of shelter for the

remaining portion of the night. The road was level, and their horses, although fatigued, were still fresh enough to do the distance without being sorely distressed. The riders were too much excited by the danger which threatened those dear to them, to feel either hunger or fatigue; they had hastily refreshed themselves and their animals, at a small brook which ran bubbling down by the way side, and lost itself in the forest. The draught seemed to invigorate both men and beasts.

Krantz, after a lengthened silence, seemed to have shaken off in some measure the dismal forebodings which had hitherto been the indulged and hopeless companions of his way.

“Schramm,” he exclaimed, “a ray of light breaks on me.”

“Thank heaven,” answered the other, “I trust it may increase into a glorious sunbeam; but by what course of reasoning, my

good friend, have you brought yourself to hope?"

"By a very simple one, which might have presented itself to me sooner, if I had not been bewildered from my usual composure by the disastrous events of the last three days, but you shall judge whether there is any rational basis for my speculations."

"Father Augustine must be informed ere this of Reiterstein's movements; he departed many days since in order to give his assistance, and use his influence in negotiating a peace between Duke Maurice and the Magdeburghers; even if Reiterstein had not declared his intention, that he was going in search of his unfortunate cousin, the monk will not, if I judge him rightly, sleep upon the necessity of sending immediate succour to secure her safety; the hope I spoke of therefore is, that he may have forestalled us."

"It is possible," said Schramm, with a sigh, "and I trust probable."

“I fear you think,” replied the miller, “that it hangs upon too many chances to say that it is a foundation upon which we may build, and feel certain that our superstructure will stand.”

“Heaven grant it may, for alas! my poor child!”

“Fear not for her, my friend; she will not be molested till the great prize has been drawn, and ere that, at least we may hope for her deliverance.”

“You reason truly, Schramm, but the beatings of a father’s heart are not easily stilled, whilst a shadow of danger threatens his offspring.”

They had now made some progress, and had nearly gained the midway over the long stretch of upland, at the termination of which they had determined to remain for the rest of the night, when a glimmering light, at some distance, caught their eager attention.

“How is this?” said Krantz, “we must be cautious, for I know of no dwelling hereabouts, but a shepherd’s hut, where, when on the moor, he takes his rest at sun-down; and yet surely from that cabin the light must proceed; let us keep our horses on the turf, and go on with caution; although not likely, Reiterstein may have sent for a reinforcement.” Upon this plan they rode forward, but either owing to the stillness of the night, the echo of their horses’ tramp before they left the road had been conveyed to some attentive watchers, or their distance was less than Krantz had supposed from the hut, for while debating in whispers how to shape their course, and avoid the cognizance of its temporary inmates, they were challenged, and a sharp whistle brought three horsemen quickly to the support of the challenger. To dare a fight would have been madness, when most likely there were numbers to contend with, and overcome

them; and their beasts were too tired to compete with horses fresh and well fed, in the attempt at escape.

“What would you with us?” cried Krantz in despair; “we are peaceable travellers, and not worth the pains of searching; let us on, I beseech you, our business is urgent, it is for life or death.”

“You must come with us, nevertheless,” said one of the party, “and if it be, as you say, you will not be detained.”

Krantz, upon this assurance, held his peace, and quietly followed his captors to the hut, once more the sport of fortune.

One of the men dismounted, and entering the cabin, was absent for a few seconds; “our commander,” he said on returning, “must examine you himself, so dismount with your companion.”

The miller obeyed, and with Schramm was ushered into the miserable hovel, which presented a curious scene. The earthen floor

was thickly piled with dry fern, on which was sleeping a dozen troopers, leaving Krantz scarcely space to approach him, whom he concluded to be the commander. This person had thrown aside his heavy armour, and was seated on a low stool, whilst on another was placed a flask and drinking cups, with some cold viands, and coarse bread.

That they had not fallen amongst banditti, the first glance assured him, for the countenance of the man who was to decide upon the truth of his statement, was noble and ingenuous; and the elegance of his person denoted him a knight in the field, and a noble at the court. There was a uniformity in the equipment of the sleeping men that bespoke them to be regular soldiers, habituated to the word of command.

Schramm followed, but he no sooner cast his eyes on the young knight before him, than a sudden exclamation of 'Sir Otho,'

escaped him, and he threw himself in the deepest agitation on his knees before him.

At this moment Krantz felt his shoulder pressed by the hand of some one, as if anxious to pass, and turning he uttered loudly and with surprise, "Konrad! heaven be praised;" he added more lowly, but fervently—"They may be saved."

Konrad now made a sign to his commander, who immediately arose, and the four left the solitary cabin to the sleeping men. Moving to some little distance, Krantz briefly told his tale, and the perilous situation of those for whose rescue they were now on their way to seek assistance.

It was now Konrad's turn to explain the cause of his presence in that lonely spot. In the mean time, Schramm had remained close to the stranger, who had been dreadfully agitated during Krantz's recital; advancing, he took the miller's hand, and said: "It is to you, my brave friend, that I am so

much indebted for such service, there can be no recompense, but the deepest gratitude which can never cease to animate me, while I have consciousness to feel, and breath to give expression to it."

Krantz now explained to Konrad Thumelda's concealment, and honestly told him that he had feared in the first instance to trust him with the secret of her confinement at the mill, so deeply had his conduct impressed him with the idea of his want of prudence, but, added the miller, "may I be so bold as to ask, Sir Otho, how your release from imprisonment has been obtained?"

"Thus, my good Krantz, when father Augustine, and in truth, I may call him my father, stated through Duke Maurice, to that noble fellow Mansfeldt, my unhappy position' he granted me a temporary release on my parole, until I could obtain, bring with me, or place in security my beloved Clotilda; with scarcely necessary rest, we have spurred on

hither, the good father has provided us with minute plans of every outlet to the Castle, which we hope to reach to-morrow ; your presence will possibly cause some alteration in our first determination. The Elector would rather that we should spare violence—but, my friends, you must need repose, our men shall be aroused ; it is now the hour in which we had proposed to quit our temporary abode, which was chosen by Konrad as the most secure from observation. You must occupy for some hours their rough pallets. The men who have already had their rest, will attend to your horses. Accept such coarse fare as we can offer ; and in the morning, assisted by your direction, we will pursue our way.”

With minds more at ease, Krantz and his companions thankfully laid themselves down upon the fern, which the troopers, aroused from their slumbers, had just quitted ; and as they did so, almost doubted,

so intense was their weariness, if they could have reached the bourne they had proposed ; for Krantz had scarcely closed his eyes since he had left his home, and robust as he was, nature was exhausted. On quitting his hard bed in the morning, he was well pleased to view the troop before him. They were a body of well-ordered hardy men, completely armed, appointed and well-mounted.

Krantz and Schramm were soon again in the saddle, and rode forward with Otho and Konrad, retracing a part of their last night's road. When within a few miles of Reiterstein, it was agreed that Schramm should proceed alone on foot to the mill, convey to Theresa the news of her husband's safety, and endeavour to procure an interview with Ludwig. They were about to change their route from the direct road to Reiterstein, and advance to the Castle on the western side, when a turn in the road

presented Schwartz to their view ; he was making his way slowly onward, when the party approached ; he endeavoured to conceal himself, but he was quickly drawn from his hiding place. It appeared from his own account, that he had wandered for some hours in the forest. When at length he emancipated himself, he found that his horse had, as he supposed, got loose ; he wandered in search of the animal the whole day, living upon such wild fruit as he could collect, and some black bread, bestowed upon him by a party of wood - cutters, whom he had encountered in the forest ; he was soon mounted upon Schramm's horse, and the party proceeded.

NOTES.

MAURICE OF SAXONY was born at Freiberg, the twenty-first of March, 1527. His earliest years were spent at the Courts of his Uncle George, of the splendour loving Albert, Elector of Mentz, and of the Elector, John Frederick. In the year 1541, he married the daughter of Philip of Hesse, and succeeded his father, Henry the Pious, who died during the summer; he quarrelled with the Elector of Saxony regarding the amount of taxes to be imposed upon a Dependency of Meissen, of which they were joint proprietors. He professed his warm attachment to the doctrines of Luther, but the favour shown him by the Emperor for services in the French and Hungarian campaigns, together with the reception into his service of the former counsellors of his deceased uncle, the zealous Catholic George, warned the Elector of the prudence of

watching the movements of his kinsman.—*Rose's Encyclopædia Metropolitana*, vol. xvi. 4to, 3rd edition, *History and Biography*, 1839.

Maurice left only one daughter, who was afterward married to William Prince of Orange, by whom she had a son who bore his grandfather's name, and inherited the great talents for which he was conspicuous. — *Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. iv. book xi. p. 136.

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Chart (Heath - Waste) derived from the Saxon *Chert* or *Hornblend*—a stone almost confined to lines of green sand formations.

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Sur ces entrefaites, le vingtième de Décembre, ceux de Magdebourg qui n'étoient point de garde, sortirent sans bruit, dans le dessein de surprendre le quartier de la cavalerie ennemie, logée à Ottersleben. Ils ne trouvèrent aucune resistance, parceque les sentinelles étoient plongés dans un sommeil si profond qu'ils ne s'aperçurent de rien ; de sorte que les troupes de Magdebourg s'emparèrent aisément de différens quartiers, et égorgèrent tous ceux qui tombèrent sous leurs mains. Ils firent aussi un grand nombre de prisonniers, entre lesquels il y eut deux cents cinquante officiers de la première condition, qui furent menés comme en triomphe dans Magdebourg.

Cette victoire enfla tellement le courage des assiégés, que dès le lendemain ils se mirent en campagne et firent des courses pour braver l'ennemi. Le Duc de Meckelbourg, indigné de cette insulte, fit venir la cavalerie qui étoit à Neustadt et à Olfenstal, et se prépara à venger l'affront que ses alliés venoient de recevoir. Comme il cherchoit l'ennemi, il fut pris en queue par la troupe qui s'étoit signalée à Ottersleben, et attaqué de front par un autre corps qui marchoit à sa rencontre. Son infanterie fut taillée en pièces, et la cavalerie se débanda après avoir fait une longue et vigoureuse résistance. Il se vit alors enveloppé de toutes parts et forcé lui-même de se rendre prisonnier.—*Histoire Générale D'Allemagne, par le P. Barre* tome viii. partie 2, p. 823.)

Dès le 26ème Janvier, l'Electeur Maurice de Saxe étoit retourné au camp devant cette place (Magdebourg). Quatre jours après son arrivée, il courut risque d'être fait prisonnier par les assiégés.—*Abregé de l'Histoire Universelle de J. Auguste de Thou*, tome i. livre iv. p. 260, 9ème edition.

19th December, 1550. — All the horse and foot within Magdeburg, but what were upon the guard, sally out of the town after midnight, that they might fall upon a party of the enemies' horse that lay in a village not far off. It was indeed a

dangerous attempt, because they were to march betwixt the enemies' camps ; however, it succeeded : for before the enemy could arm, they possessed themselves of the village, and set fire to it in several places, all of them having white shirts over their armour. Of the enemy, whoever made any resistance were killed, most of them being persons of quality : many fought from the houses, but these being set on fire were burnt. Many gentlemen of quality were taken, and presently carried to the town, with about two hundred and sixty horses. Next morning, when by break of day they were upon their retreat homeward, they met a party of horse, commanded by George Duke of Meckleburg, who presently charged them, but being beset by the horse on the front and the foot on the rear, he himself, who first began the war was made prisoner, and carried into the town.—*Sleidan's History of the Reformation of the Church*, translated by Edward Bohun, book xxii. p. 505.

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Ils furent déclarés généraux de l'armée et on donna le commandement de la cavalerie au Duc de Meckelbourg.—*P. Barre*, p. 812, tome viii.

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On commenca alors à conférer avec Maurice : le secretaire nommé Heydeck, alloit sans cesse de

la ville au camp, et du camp à la ville.—*De Thou*, tome ix. book viii. p. 82, 4to. edition, Londres.

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Albert Count Mansfeldt was in the town, who had not, indeed, been outlawed by the Emperor, but was turned out of all, for his having continued to the last true and faithful to John-Frederic, Duke of Saxony.—*Sleidan*, book xxii. p. 504.

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During these transactions the siege of Magdeburg was carried on with various success. At the time Charles proscribed the citizens of Magdeburg, and put them under the ban of the empire, he had exhorted and even enjoined all the neighbouring states to take arms against them as enemies and common rebels.—*Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. iv. p. 40.

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Maurice was of middling stature, but of slight growth; his bearing was proud and daring—his countenance was small, his forehead high—his blue eyes sharp and clear, displaying equally deep wisdom and courageous vigour—his light red beard hung down to his very breast, he wore the hair of his head cut short, according to the custom of the times. In his dress and arms, he combined what was splendidly ornamental with what was suitable and useful. In chivalrous exercises, Maurice was

dextrous and powerful.—From *Moritz, Herzog und Chunfürst zu Sachsen*, by T. A. Von Langenn ; 1st part, p. 506 ; see also *Arnoldi Vitâ Mauriti : apud Menken*.

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L'Electeur Maurice fut donc déclaré par la diète, Général de l'armée ; on ordonna le payement de la somme de dix mille écus d'or pour les frais qui avoient déjà été faits, et on en accorda soixante mille par mois pour le tems que cette expédition dureroit encore.—*Le Père Barre*, tome viii. p. 815 ; *De Thou*, tome i. livre vi. p. 434.

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L'Elbe s'enfla alors extraordinairement. Les moulins qui étoient sur cette rivière furent emportés par la violence des eaux, et une partie des remparts de la ville fut abattue. Pour réparer ces pertes, la Régence de Magdebourg fit armer deux navires, dont on se servit pour transporter des vivres dans la ville, et pour s'emparer de ceux des ennemis. Mais les Impériaux ayant équipé quelques bâtimens, et conduit leurs travaux jusqu' au bord de l'Elbe, empêchèrent les assiégés de naviger sur ce fleuve.—*P. Barre*, tome viii, p. 835.

The enemy then built castles upon the Elbe, above and below the town, and having posted vessels on both sides well manned, hindered the townsmen from venturing out by water.—*Sleidan's*

History of the Reformation of the Church, translated by Edward Bohun, book xxii. p. 513.

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While the citizens of Magdeburg, animated by the discourses of their pastors, and the soldiers, encouraged by the example of their officers, endured all the hardships of a siege without murmuring, and defended themselves with the same ardour which they had at first discovered: the troops of the besiegers acted with extreme remissness, repining at every thing they suffered in a service they disliked. They broke out more than once into open mutiny and demanded the arrears of their pay.—*Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. iv. p. 42; also *Sleidan*, book xxii. p. 514.

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But afterwards George, Duke of Meckleburg, the son of Albert, a youth who had served under Duke Henry, wheedled them all into his service. He began his march through the country of Halberstadt, and came afterwards into the Province of Magdeburg, plundering, burning, and spoiling wherever he passed; there he surprised the Town of Wansleben which he burnt and razed; and having attacked the castle that stood hard by, but in vain, and lost some of his men, he marched forward, doing a great deal of mischief in all places.—*Sleidan*, book xxii. p. 500.

George of Mecklenburg, a younger brother of the reigning Duke, an active and ambitious prince, collected a considerable number of those soldiers of fortune who had accompanied Henry of Brunswick in all his wild enterprises; and though a zealous Lutheran himself invaded the territories of the Magdeburgers, hoping that by the merit of this service he might procure some part of their domain to be allotted to him as an establishment.—*Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. iv. p. 40.

Ainsi ayant pris son chemin par le territoire d'Halberstat, il entra dans le pays de Magdebourg, où après avoir laissé faire à ses soldats tout ce qu'ils ont coutume de commettre, lorsque la licence n'a point de frein, il prit la ville de Wansleben, et y mit le feu le 17 de Septembre &c.—*De Thou Histoire Universelle*, tome premiere, livre vi. p. 429, 4to. ed. Londres.

Cependant le Prince George de Mecklenbourg, à l'instigation de Charles Quint étoit entré dans le pays de Magdebourg, où il mettoit tout à feu et à sang.—*Abregé de l'Histoire Universelle de J. Auguste de Thou*, tome 1, livre iii. p. 225.

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